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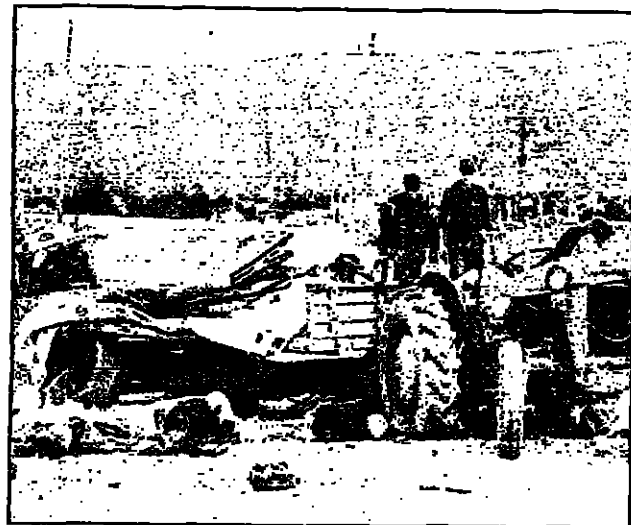
FRIDAY 16 APRIL 1999

(IR50p) 45p

THE INFORMATION DAILY
BRITAIN'S BEST ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
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TOMORROW
PETER MANDELSON
ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS
(SUCH AS: WHEN WILL YOU RETURN TO TONY'S CABINET?)

'This is a horror story. There is no other way to describe it'



Yugoslav police at the scene of the tragedy yesterday

THIS IS a horror story. There are no other words for it. It is the story of a series of massacres along a road lined with torched houses and cherry blossom, of smouldering skeletons and women cut in half, of a man's head lying in a field with the wind blowing his brown hair against the grass, and of corpses lying in a squalid hospital nearby.

Nato did all this, say the Serbs, and it is true that US munitions litter the road and fields around here, sometimes within a few inches of corpses, body parts, human bones, smashed tractors and trailers, their pathetic contents of old clothes, pots and family snapshots lying around them.

Clearly there were air strikes here. And Nato appears to be responsible for an atrocity.

But we saw other dark and terrible things on the road between Djakovica and Prizren yesterday afternoon. Busloads of terrified Kosovo Albanians, women and children and old men, peering from behind black curtains as they were driven east, row after row of burnt out houses, some of them still burning, a few only recently set on fire.

And several of the dead along the road appeared to have been attacked by machine-gun fire.

The Serbs say that 74 Albanian refugees were massacred on this road on Wednesday afternoon. And I counted 20 corpses - or parts of bodies - in three bombing locations along a 12-mile stretch of highway, and in the mortuary at Prizren, where a half-naked woman and a tiny girl covered in blood lay on the floor partly covered in shrouds.

Esnet Sulja, whose sister-in-



ROBERT FISK
IN TEVZICKI MOST

law was in the mortuary, told journalists brought here by Serb officials that he came from the Kosovo village of Malice and was told to move "for his own safety" three weeks ago to Dobros.

On Wednesday, he says he was driving his tractor containing 35 people in the trailer from Djakovica to Prizren when planes began dropping bombs around him.

The 46-year-old man, who had lacerations on his face, told us from his hospital bed that five of the passengers had been killed in the trailer.

There were terrible scenes along the road, for the Serbs had left many of the bodies where they were found. A grey-haired old man lay cut in half in a tree, six corpses, including that of a young woman, lay in brightly coloured clothes in a field where they had been dragged after the air raid. I found a human head 50 metres away and skeletons burnt out in the back of another trailer.

The munitions parked along the road bore several American markings. One bomb part was marked "for use on MK82" and was marked assembly 96214assy78-201872, with a date of manufacture of March 1978. A missile circuit board contained the code fchem872110.



A young refugee at a makeshift camp in Kukes, Albania yesterday. He was in the column, fleeing Kosovo, that was attacked by Nato jets

Dylan Martinez/Reuters

Nato apologises for convoy deaths

NATO APOLOGISED yesterday for attacking a column of Albanian refugees in Kosovo on Wednesday, killing at least 60 people, in what may prove the first big test of Western public support for the Balkan air campaign.

The Serbian authorities seized the opportunity of a propaganda windfall, dropped their ban on journalists in Kosovo and rushed foreign reporters to the scene of the carnage to interview wounded survivors under Serb supervision.

And although Nato admitted US pilots based in Italy did hit what they thought were military

convoys near the western Kosovo town of Djakovica, questions remain unanswered over who was responsible for the machine-gunned bodies strewn along the Prizren-Djakovica road.

Nato played a tape-recording from the debriefing of an F-16 pilot who said he made two passes over a three-vehicle convoy near Djakovica and fired a laser-guided bomb at the lead vehicle on his third pass. The pilot said he saw villages burning below and attacked what he thought were Yugoslav

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army vehicles engaged in the ethnic cleansing of the region.

The pilot, whose name was not released, said on the tape: "I make a decision at that point that these are the people responsible for burning down the villages that I've seen so far. I go in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-

guided bomb attack on that vehicle, destroying the lead vehicle."

The Nato account still did not dovetail with the Serbian video footage showing mangled bodies next to a column of tractors and trailers.

In Washington and London, leaders said they would not be

derailed by the "one tragic accident" from prosecuting an intensified air campaign against the forces of the Yugoslav leader, Slobodan Milosevic.

The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said: "We regret these things deeply when they happen but that should not make us flinch from placing responsibility for this conflict squarely on the shoulders of Milosevic, who has begun this conflict."

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, added: "How dare they [the Serbs] produce crocodile tears for people killed in the conflict for which they themselves are responsible."

The White House said Nato would continue the air campaign into midsummer if necessary if the Serbs continued to drive the Albanians from Kosovo. The US Defense Secretary William Cohen said the campaign could go on for months and added: "This is not going to be quick or easy or neat."

Nato yesterday attacked army barracks in Belgrade and other cities, Serbian state television transmitters and more bridges. US Apache attack helicopters are arriving in Albania and the aircraft carrier HMS *Invincible* has taken up position in the Adriatic.

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Australia	A\$5.50	Ireland	Ir£12.00
Austria	Ac\$20.00	Italy	Li\$ 9.00
Belgium	B\$100.00	Luxembourg	Li\$100.00
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Cyprus	Cy£ 2.00	Netherlands	g\$ 6.50
Czech Republic	K112	Poland	Plz\$2.00
Denmark	Dk\$10.00	Portugal	Esc\$20.00
Finland	Fm\$10.00	Singapore	S\$5.00
France	Ffr\$10.00	Spain	Pes\$375
Germany	Dm\$5.00	Sweden	Sk\$25.00
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Hungary	Hfor\$ 500	USA	\$3.50

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RETURN TO PARADISE
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BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY at *Blace, Macedonia*

The latest arrivals were bused away before reporters could speak to them, but UN re-

A further 300 refugees entered the country near the remote highland town of Jazince, many more were trapped in no man's land awaiting registra-



"We are expecting significant movement in the coming days," said Ms Ghedini. "Some people aren't even asked to leave. They just heard there was an opportunity to cross a border [and left]."

The strategy of the Yugoslav authorities remains puzzling, however. A number of refugees at the Blace crossing reported that a train containing as many as a dozen carriages full of

Rumours of another huge refugee influx have galvanised government and humanitarian agencies in Macedonia, which has barely been able to cope with the 120,000 refugees presently in the country, the majority of them living with

"When the Nato bombs started, we were forced to leave for the villages," said Elhide Rexhepi, who arrived in Brazde on Wednesday from

"Even if it only keeps up at this rate, we will be facing a huge number," a senior Macedonian official said yesterday. "I am not very optimistic that the situation will get better."

to a Nato mission outraged military brass and upset government officials by refusing to set sail as he opposes the attacks on Yugoslavia.

"Queues for food supplies in front of the state shops are longer and longer," one resident of Pristina said.
City streets were clogged

"The whole Kicma tunnel in Dardania suburb is full of vehicles, with nearby storehouses also used for vehicles, equipment or soldiers. All en-

BY KATHERINE BUTLER

The premises of state companies including the headquarters of the Ibar Lepenc

All land and mobile telephone communications were

"Yesterday around Pristina heavy gunfire was heard, mostly in the daytime, especially after midday," he said. He had heard that Serbian forces had

"Three strong detonations were heard on the south-east of Pristina, where the air-raid alert has been continuously on for more than three days."

across Serbia but it gave no details of any casualties. **Pristina has been the target of Nato attacks, especially since Monday.**

BRITAIN TODAY

Noon today

KEY

14 Temperature, °C

30 Wind speed, mph and direction

FORECAST

General allround: Scotland will start cold and frosty but mainly dry with some sunny spells and lighter winds than recently. Cloud will gradually build and there will be a scattering of wintry showers later. Northern Ireland will also have sunny spells and a few showers. England and Wales will start cold. There will be some sunshine but showers will soon break out. Some of them will hail, sleet or snow. The showers will be heaviest across south Wales and south-west England.

London, SE & Cent: S England, E Anglia, Midlands: Starting cold but bright before showers break out. Some of them will hail or sleet. A light southerly breeze. Max temp 9-11°C (48-52°F).

Cent: N England, E & NE England: Sunny spells with showers, some of them falling as hail, sleet or snow. A light easterly breeze. Max temp 6-9°C (43-48°F).

Channel Is, SW England, S Wales: Early sunshine but showers ending in from the west. A light east to south-west breeze. Max temp 7-9°C (45-48°F).

N Wales, NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: Sunny breaks this morning but scattered showers expected. Some of them will hail or sleet. A light north-easterly wind. Max temp 6-9°C (43-48°F).

NE & NW Scotland, Aberdeen, N & W Wales: A very cold start with a wide-spread frost. Early sunshine will become more limited as showers break out. Many of them wintry. A moderate west to north-west wind. Max temp 4-6°C (39-43°F).

SE & SW Scotland, Edinburgh, Glasgow: Some sunshine but remaining cold after early frost. Wintry showers will break out later. A light north-easterly wind. Max temp 5-7°C (41-45°F).

N Ireland: Early sunny spells but cold with wintry showers breaking out. A light north-easterly wind. Max temp 6-8°C (43-46°F).

OUTLOOK

A lot of cloud and some showery rain in the east and south-east tomorrow. Other areas will be brighter but there will still be some wintry showers. Sunday will be cold with sunny spells and showers, these of hail or sleet with snow on hills.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leightonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December.

Bristol: M5 J18-19. Major roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001.

Warrickshire: M42 Between J10 Barnworth services and J6 Sutton Coldfield Parkway and continue. Until 22nd April.

South Yorkshire: M1 Between J4 Tinsley Viaduct (A109) & J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A1678). Sheffield. Carriageway reduced to two lanes southbound. Until 21st November 2000.

Gloucestershire: A40 Lansdown Rd,

Chebenham. Closed due to roadworks in-bound. Divertions in place. Until 1st June.

Co.Astrim: A1 Kingsway. Dummurry Roadworks, various lane restrictions. Until 1st August.

Derbyshire: A6 between Derby Southern Bypass (A105) and Shireford Road roundabout. East of Alveston. Continflow for work on new A50. Until 15th October.

AA Roadwatch: Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news. See The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (incl VAT).

LIGHTING UP				YESTERDAY					
Belfast	8.28pm	to	6.18am	EXTREMES					
Birmingham	8.07pm	to	6.05am	Warrassez London 11C (52F)					
Bristol	8.06pm	to	6.17am	Coldest: At night: Fylde/Grays SC (41F)					
Glasgow	8.25pm	to	6.08am	Wettest: Aviemore 20.0 mm.					
London	7.58pm	to	6.02am	Sunniest: Isles of Scilly 7.0 hrs					
Manchester	8.01pm	to	6.05am	For 24hrs to 2pm Thursday					
Newcastle	8.12pm	to	6.00am						
HIGH TIDES									
	AM	HT	PM						
Astonmole	8.12	14.0	8.33	14.0	Sun				
Cork	6.47	6.47	4.6		Rain				
Devonport	6.37	5.7	7.02	5.7	Max				
Dover	11.54	6.8	12.15	7.0	°F				
Edinburgh	12.19	6.3	12.47	6.2	Aberdeen	12.2	0.3	7	45
Falmouth	9.08	5.5	6.33	5.5	Anchorage	9.0	0.5	7	45
Greenwich	1.21	3.2	1.46	3.4	Belfast	3.5	2.5	7	45
Harwich	-	-	1.03	4.3	Birmingham	3.7	0.3	7	45
Holyhead	11.12	5.9	11.27	5.8	Bournemouth	4.3	0.3	7	45
How (Albert Bay)	7.15	8.8	7.24	9.1	Cardiff	2.0	0.4	5	41
Kings Lynn	7.15	7.3	7.25	7.8	Boston	5.9	0.3	5	41
Leith	12.26	5.7	12.38	5.8	Bristol	0.9	-	5	41
Liverpool	12.12	10.0	12.36	9.9	Clacton	5.4	0.3	5	41
Millford Haven	7.08	7.4	7.30	7.4	Cromer	10.0	1.8	43	43
Newquay	6.00	7.4	6.21	7.4	Edinburgh	4.6	0.3	7	45
Portland	7.57	7.2	8.0	8.2	Exmouth	3.1	2.5	7	45
Portsmouth	12.13	4.7	12.40	4.9	Falmouth	6.1	5.8	7	45
Portlaoine	9.01	5.3	9.22	5.3	Folliscombe	-	-	-	-
Scarborough	5.00	5.8	5.09	6.0	Glasgow	7.4	0.3	7	45
Wick	12.15	3.6	12.48	3.5	Hastings	7.0	0.5	8	46
Height measured in metres				Howe	-	-	-	-	-
AIR QUALITY				Isle-of-man	7.8	1.3	7	45	
Today's readings				Jersey	9.0	0.5	8	45	
	NO _x	SO ₂		Isle of Wight	4.3	6.9	8	46	
London	Good	Good		Jersey	3.8	0.5	7	45	
S England	Good	Good		Kendal	-	-	-	-	
Wales	Good	Good		Leeds	10.2	0.3	9	49	
C England	Good	Good		Lerwick	7.8	1.0	7	45	
N England	Good	Good		Littlehampton	-	-	-	-	
Scotland	Good	Good		London	5.9	0.3	8	46	
N Ireland	Good	Good		Lowestoft	8.3	6.9	8	46	
SUN & MOON				Manchester	8.9	0.3	8	46	
Sun rises: 05.04				Margate	-	-	-	-	
Sun sets: 19.53				Morecambe	8.2	0.3	6	43	
Moon rises: 06.41				Newcastle	10.5	0.3	7	45	
Moon sets: 20.24				Newquay	7.2	0.6	7	45	
New moon: Today.				Norwich	7.7	6.9	9	46	
				Orford	-	1.3	8	46	
				Orkney-on-way	2.1	0.8	7	45	
				Salcombe	-	-	-	-	
				Scarborough	10.4	0	5	41	
				Southend	11.0	0.3	7	45	
				Southport	-	-			

[illegible]

A pilot saw blazing villages, then a convoy. Seconds later, he fired

REFUGEE TRAGEDY

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

EIGHTY-ONE YEAR-OLD Dibrani Asmani had been on the road for three days in Kosovo, edging ever closer to the Albanian border he hoped would offer safety.

Instead, early on Wednesday afternoon, the world exploded around him and Mr Asmani's family disappeared before his eyes. "Suddenly there was a big blast, and I started running," said Mr Asmani, leaning on his walking stick.

"All I could think was, my God, Nato is bombing us. I ran through the field like a mouse. I'm ashamed, but I'm too old to lie about it."

More than 36 hours after one or more convoys of Kosovan refugees were hit by bombs from Nato planes, details are slowly emerging about exactly what happened between 1pm and 3pm on a road near Djakovica in south-west Kosovo.

Perhaps because of a lack of facts, or because there is no reliable information, at least two versions of what happened have emerged.

What is without doubt is that Nato planes bombed the very refugees they were trying to help - people like Mr Asmani.

Nato called it a tragic accident. The tragedy began to unfold just after midday on Wednesday when an attack team of American F-16 strike aircraft armed with laser-guided bombs, took off from their base in Aviano, in northern Italy.

Their mission was to fly over south-west Kosovo, specifically over towns where Serb MUP (interior ministry) police - those responsible for the past month's ethnic cleansing - had been spotted, and over areas known to be "strategic supply routes" for the Yugoslav military machine.

Flying at 15,000ft, out of reach of anti-aircraft artillery and most hand-held surface-to-air missiles, the pilot in the lead aircraft was passing over open country between the village of

Decani and the town of Djakovica. From the cockpit of the single-seat aircraft he saw the ground beneath dotted with villages that had been set on fire. Three, four, he counted, all recently set alight and still burning and all, he presumed, the work of the MUP.

Then, passing over a dirt road that linked the two settlements, he saw movement on the ground. Looking closer he saw what he thought was a 60-vehicle convoy of vehicles. At the front of the convoy were three green trucks.

"I saw three uniformly shaped dark green vehicles, look like deuce-and-a-half (two and a half-ton) troop-carrying vehicles," the pilot said, on a tape played to reporters yesterday by Nato.

"They came to a stop at the next house down the road. I am convinced now that that's [army and police] forces working their way down toward Djakovica."

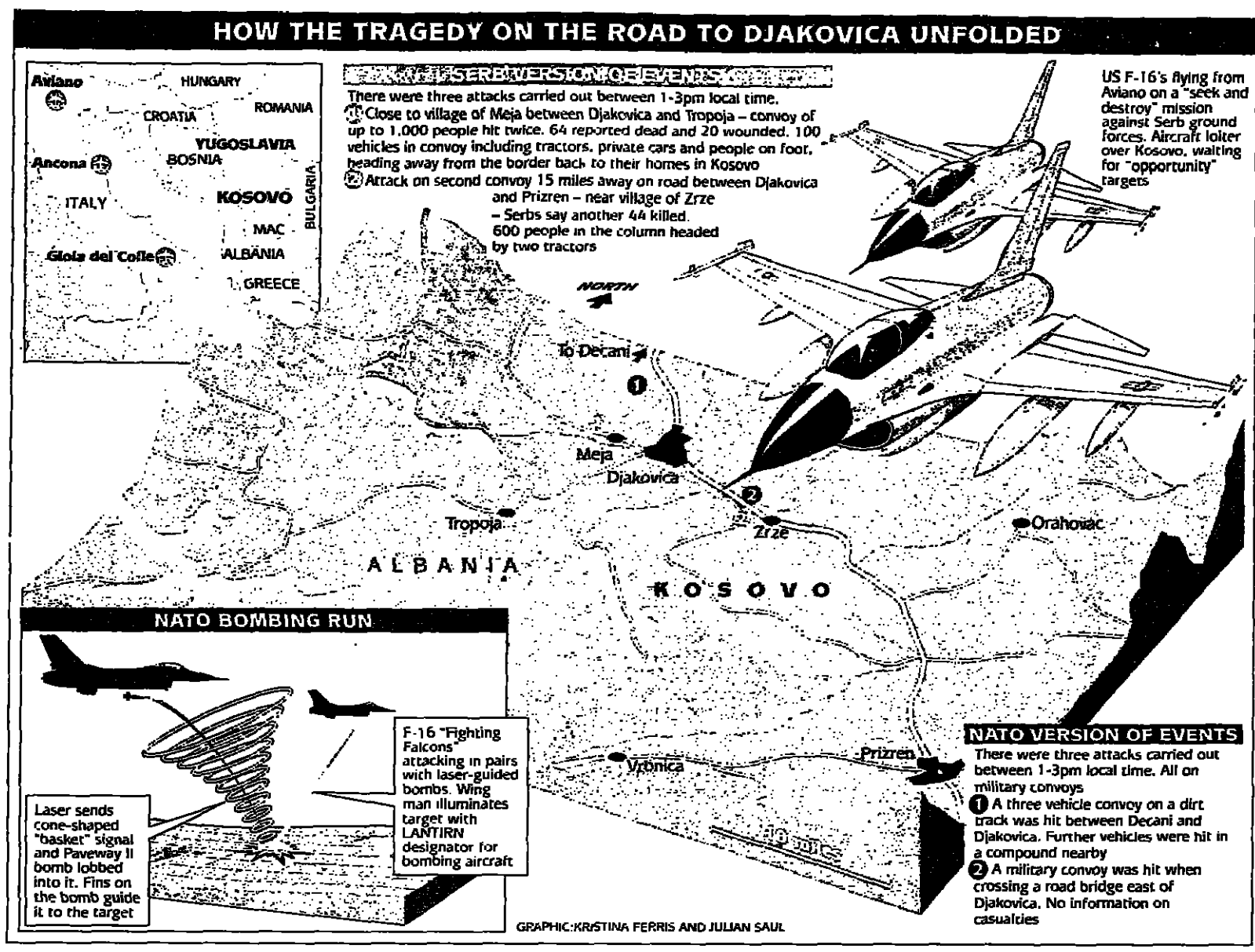
Satisfied that he had identified the same forces who had been setting fire to the villages, the pilot decided to mount an attack.

"I go in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-guided bomb attack on that vehicle destroying the lead vehicle," he said.

Realising he was running low on fuel, the pilot and his wingman - the second pilot in the flight, who was marking the target with a laser for the bomber - pulled away.

He passed on the map coordinates of the target to the next "flight", or squad, of aircraft. In turn, this next flight spotted a further three vehicles in a compound beside the dirt track. Using the same laser-guided weapons, this team then moved in to destroy these targets, dropping three bombs.

Later in the afternoon another team of F-16 bombers attacked a separate military convoy. These were spotted on a road bridge east of Djakovica.



GRAPHIC: KRISTINA FERRIS AND JULIAN SAUL

claim the first convoy to be hit was a procession of 1,000 people and 100 vehicles - tractors and private cars - struck by three bombs as it passed the village of Maja, close to Djakovica. They say 64 people were killed and 20 wounded.

Soon afterwards, they say, Nato aircraft struck a second convoy, this one a line of 600 people travelling on the same road but in the village of Zrze, 15 miles to the east. While this may have been the second of Nato's targets, Belgrade insists there were no military vehicles.

hicles, just refugees' tractors and trailers. They said 44 people were killed at Zrze and dozens injured.

"[This was] a horrendous massacre" claimed the Serbian President, Milan Milutinovic. "This cannot be explained as an error when the columns of refugees were bombed four times - this was done deliberately."

"It was a massacre of Albanian refugees who were returning to their homes in the middle of the day."

What can we know for sure? We know that innocent refugees were killed on Wednesday by bombs dropped from Nato planes.

We know that they were desperate, exhausted people who had probably been on the move for weeks, their only possessions the little they could carry as they fled from their homes.

We can presume that they were not deliberately targeted by Nato - the political fallout from this "accident" will be bad enough.

We must question Pentagon and Nato suggestions that Yu-

goslav MIG fighters attacked the columns. Experts point out that Nato would have spotted and shot down any Serb planes.

In any case, the refugees themselves would not have been able to identify whether the planes were Serb or Nato. They simply talk of being attacked from the air, of the ground exploding in front and around and behind them, and of shattered bodies and twisted machinery.

They talk of a horror that has become ingrained on their memories.

PROPAGANDA WARS

Wednesday 14 April

15.53: Belgrade claims Nato missiles hit a 100-vehicle refugee convoy.

15.56: Officials in Pristina say there were two attacks. They report 64 people killed and 20 wounded at Meja and six killed at Zrze.

16.30: Nato plays down Serb claims. "We have no information about this," says a spokesman.

17.59: Jeff Rowland of the World Food Programme says refugees entering Albania report three aircraft dropped three bombs killing "many" people.

19.06: Nato confirms its aircraft had attacked Yugoslav military vehicles on a road where the convoy was attacked.

19.44: Nato spokesman Jamie Shea says: "Nobody should jump to any conclusions. Nato doesn't attack civilian targets."

20.05: Tony Blair says: "We cannot take at face value any claim made by Serb authorities. Anything they do they use for propaganda purposes."

20.53: Pentagon admits Nato may have struck the convoy.

Thursday 15 April

11.00: Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, says: "We understand that yesterday, on a country road, a number of people lost their lives which may have been during allied air attacks."

12.30: Nato admits that one of its planes mistakenly bombed a refugee convoy.

14.00: Nato gives full details of what it calls a "tragic accident". Jamie Shea says: "Sometimes one has to risk the lives of the few to save the lives of the many."

'I roll in, put my system on the vehicle and execute...'



An F-16 Hornet pilot saluting before taking off from the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt in the Adriatic

THIS ACCOUNT of the attack on the convoy was given by the unnamed American fighter pilot of the first aircraft in a debriefing session. A recording of the debriefing was played yesterday at a Nato briefing session in Brussels.

THE PILOT started by saying that as he flew at 15,000ft over South-west Kosovo he saw what he took to be systematic burning of villages by Serb forces.

"I work my way back up to the road, and I see another house that had just been set ablaze and a three-vehicle convoy moving South-east about a click (kilometre) from the freshest burning house. They come to a stop at the next house down the road."

"I am convinced now the VJ (Yugoslav Army) and MUP (Ministry of Interior police)

forces, working their way down towards Djakovica and the refugees, are preparing to set this next house on fire.

"I made several passes to ensure that they are in fact military vehicles. I roll in on two passes to get a close look both with my eyeballs and my targeting pod."

"I make a decision at that point that these are the people responsible for burning down the villages that I have seen so far. I roll in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-guided bomb attack on that vehicle destroying the lead vehicle."

The pilot then said that his aircraft was low on fuel and had to pull out of the area. He then described how he then passed on the target co-ordinates and a general description of the vehicles to another pilot who then also attacked.

Strike aircraft hunt in deadly pairs controlled from on high

THE MISSION

BY JOHN DAVISON

THE TWO F-16 Fighting Falcons would have taken off from Aviano air base in northern Italy as part of a typical bombing formation of eight aircraft that work in pairs or "two ship flights". But they are just the strike element of a complicated attacking "package" that has to rendezvous in the air and be co-ordinated all the way to the target and back.

First, they would meet up with an airborne tanker to refuel before the mission was brought together under control of an E-3 Awaacs aircraft, flying at about 30,000 feet. It carries out the role of an airborne air traffic controller, guiding the various elements together.

Other aircraft would include those jamming Serb radar and carrying Harm missiles to destroy radar defences. There would also have been fighter aircraft to protect the rest from enemy fighters. "The whole

mission involves punching a hole into the enemy's air defences, completing your work and then punching your way out again," said an RAF source yesterday.

The "work" in this case involved a seek-and-destroy mission against Serb tanks, other armour and vehicles on the ground. Such sorties flown by Nato planes have often been frustrated by bad weather that has kept Serb forces hidden.

The difference between this and other missions is that the exact target will probably not be known before the aircraft take off, and no prior approval will be needed. They are looking for what are called "opportunity targets", and fly in holding patterns above the area until one presents itself.

This information might come from intelligence on the ground, from unmanned drones flying over the area or from American Jstars aircraft, which use radar to spot movements from up to 150 miles away. All this would be fed to the pilots through the Awaacs, which would also be sending a picture of the whole mission to air commanders, either in Italy or flying over the area in a specially converted Hercules mobile command and control centre.

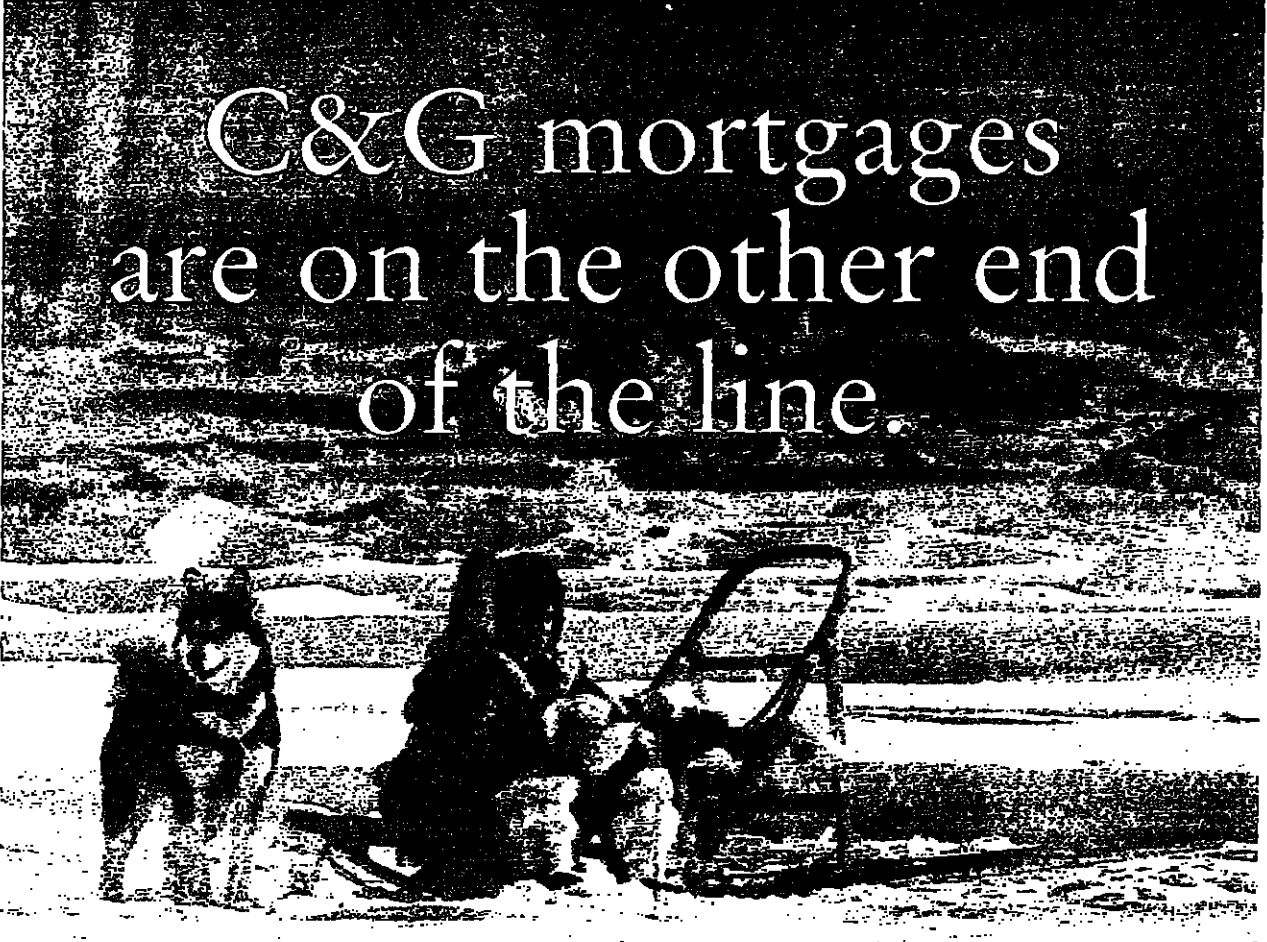
Alternatively, the pilot might just see something on the ground and launch an attack. In that case, no target approval would be necessary. This kind of attack, then, is a long way from the process of checking and approving target lists that

has been much discussed over the past weeks. It relies entirely on a pilot being able to identify a military target correctly.

"At the end of the day there has to be an element of discretion, because mobile targets move," said one source.

Because of continuing fear about Yugoslav air defences, particularly from hand held surface-to-air missiles, the bombing is almost all taking place from medium altitude of about 15,000ft. From that height, three vehicles in a convoy would only appear as dots on the ground.

Rules of engagement include the strict requirement for pilots to abort a mission if they are not certain they can avoid civilian casualties, and such cancelled attacks have been reported in respect of RAF Harriers. But perhaps it was just a matter of time before this kind of pilot error led to a disaster.



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Macedonia is 'collapsing under strain'

REFUGEE CAMPS

By RICHARD LLOYD PARRY in Skopje

THE MACEDONIAN government angrily denounced Western nations yesterday for breaking their promises to give sanctuary to Kosovo refugees, and warned that the country's fragile economy was heading for collapse under the burden of the Balkans crisis.

"We can accept refugees at the borders and transport them to other countries or to the airport," the Macedonian interior minister, Pavle Trajnov, said in an interview with *The Independent*. "Why the foreign countries don't accept that, I do not know. They declare that they want to help the refugees, but it is enough just to come to the camps, take photos with the refugees, and then tell the whole world. 'See, we've done so much for the refugees'."

He spoke as the British Foreign Office minister, Tony Lloyd, was flying into the Macedonian capital, Skopje, for a half-day tour after spending a few hours in neighbour-

ing Albania. Mr Lloyd met the Macedonian Prime Minister, Ljubco Georgievski, and toured the Braza refugee camp, which has been built and operated by the British army.

Earlier this month, Britain announced that it was prepared to provide sanctuary for "some thousands" of refugees. Other countries, including the US, made similar announcements, but so far few have lived up to their commitments.

"We have always made it clear that where there was a demand, the UK would take in refugees," Mr Lloyd said, after posing for the cameras with refugee children in front of their tents. "But we are not interested in creating a permanent refugee camp outside the region. We are determined that these people will go back to their homes, but if the UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) said, 'Please reconsider', then we will reconsider."

According to the UNHCR, 1,000 or so refugees are being evacuated every day to half-a-dozen countries, including Germany, Turkey, Poland, Switzerland, Norway, and even Israel and Iceland. But there was confusion over whether Britain had been asked formally to receive refugees. "If Britain says we haven't made a formal request then I suppose we haven't," a UNHCR spokesman said yesterday.

Macedonia has been bitterly criticised for the desperate situation earlier this month, when tens of thousands of refugees were trapped for three days in a morass of mud at the border crossing of Blace, and roughly treated by border police. But Mr Trajnov accused foreign governments of hypocrisy in their approach to the crisis. "We've seen it before in other places, and it's happening again here," he said. "They pass judgement on how the refugees are being cared for and say the camps

are not well equipped and not well organised. At the same time, they come up with 300 excuses why they themselves shouldn't [take any refugees]."

Since last spring, when fighting began in earnest between the Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army, some 150,000 Kosovo Albanians have fled to

Macedonia - an 8 per cent population increase in a country with an already delicate ethnic and political balance between Slavs and Albanians.

As Mr Lloyd pointed out: "It's equivalent to the UK absorbing 5 million refugees. If we were faced with 5 million people queuing at the Channel Tunnel, we'd also have cause

for concern." The difference in Macedonia is that ethnic Albanians already made up a quarter of the population.

The vast refugee influx of the past three weeks has raised fears of ethnic conflict with members of the Macedonian majority.

In 1994, there were riots in Macedonia after the govern-

ment tried to stop ethnic Albanians opening their own university in the western town of Tetovo. Mr Trajnov said he was concerned about the presence among the refugees of members of the KLA, and the potential conflict which this could create with the government in Belgrade.

He said that as a result of

the crisis, foreign companies had suspended investment negotiations and banks were reluctant to give credit to Macedonian borrowers.

"I think in six months there will be a total collapse of the economy," he said. "Then there would be a lot of side-effects for national security, law and order and society."



British Foreign minister Tony Lloyd touring Braza refugee camp: 'We're determined these people will go back to their homes' Tom Pilsner

15 mass gravesites found in Kosovo

WAR CRIMES

By STEVE BOGGAN in Tirana

WAR CRIMES investigators in the Hague have been given evidence of at least 15 mass graves inside Kosovo.

Witnesses have told of large groups of ethnic Albanians being slaughtered and buried all over the province. Prosecutors from the tribunal, set up in the aftermath of the 1992-5 Bosnia war, plan to exhume bodies after Serb forces are out of the region.

"It's terrifying," Graham Blewitt, the deputy prosecutor of the International War Crimes Tribunal told *The Independent* yesterday. "We also heard stories of massacre and rape on a large scale."

Mr Blewitt refusing to divulge the locations, logging the information so far as "unconfirmed". But the number and similarity of accounts is chilling.

The medical aid organisation Medecins sans Frontieres says it has more than 50 testimonies relating to the existence of the graves from refugees who have crossed into northern Albania.

"We have assigned one of our aid workers full-time to take statements from witnesses who are talking time and time again of mass graves," said Christopher Stokes, MSF's emergency co-ordinator in Tirana.

"We have interviewed only a fraction of the people who want to talk to us because we always insist on a counsellor being present. The trauma involved in retelling their stories can be considerable."

Governments, aid agencies and prosecutors have learned much from mistakes made in Bosnia, when vital witnesses to events were lost in the confusion of the conflict. This time, the collection of evidence is running in tandem with the provision of aid.

"We are much better prepared this time," said Mr Blewitt. "When we started in Bosnia, we were the new kid on the block and we have to carve out a niche for ourselves. Now, we have established relationships and lines of communication to ensure we get the information we need to bring the perpetrators of war crimes to justice."

The help of agencies and governments is vital to the UN-funded tribunal. It has only 70 investigators, although its budget, at \$100m is not inconsiderable.

Earlier this week two of its staff, Frank Dutton, investigations commander, and Tim Kelly, arrived in the Albanian capital Tirana to begin gathering evidence of atrocities. Both men are former detectives, Mr Dutton with the South African police, Mr Kelly

with the police department of New South Wales in Australia.

Almost immediately, they were given more than 300 witness statements and 30 hours of video-taped evidence by the office of Albert Rakiqi, Albania's chief prosecutor, detailing acts of rape, murder and violence.

On Wednesday, 29 regional prosecutors met in Tirana to discuss the collection of evidence from the 314,000 refugees dotted in camps, municipal buildings, warehouses and family homes all over the country.

"I have 80 people working full time on this," Mr Rakiqi said. "So far we have interviewed people who claim evidence of massacres at Raak, Goden, Rahovic, Gjakov and Kamenice. We believe there are other places."

"There is also evidence relating to rape. We have statements from 13 women who say they were raped by Serbs. We want to gather as much evidence as soon as possible while we can still keep in

contact with the victims and witnesses."

Yesterday, *The Independent* gave the Hague investigators details of Dr Silvia Miria, director of the Tirana Counselling Centre for Women and Girls, whose work gathering evidence on the rape of Kosovar women was featured on Tuesday.

They plan to meet her again. But Mr Dutton a former Nazi war crimes investigator in Australia, said the work of investigators would be pointless without the willingness of the international community to bring suspects to trial.

He said there was disappointment at the Hague that some of those indicted over the Bosnian atrocities - including the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, and the military commander Ratko Mladic - are still free.

"Perhaps if they had been tried and convicted it might have proved a deterrent to others," he said. "And we would not be in this position now."

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Bombs, missiles and aircraft crowd the flight deck of the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, which is operating in the Adriatic

Reuters

Army of 200,000 needed for all-out ground war

ALLIED STRATEGY

By MARK DEJEVSKY in Washington

AMERICAN DEFENCE chiefs yesterday gave their most comprehensive account of the Balkans war and of the allied strategy for victory over the forces of Slobodan Milosevic.

Defending the campaign on Capitol Hill, William Cohen, Defence Secretary, appeared with Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Mr Cohen said even the air operation was "very risky". The reason there had been no planning for "ground troops" was because "in truth, there was no consensus [in Nato] to do anything but this".

He noted that there had been no consensus in Congress either, even for the 4,000 men the US was planning to contribute to a Nato peace-keeping contingent of seven times that number.

Mr Cohen gave a warning that from now on Nato and US casualties were probable rather than possible.

Any debate on ground troops in Nato, he said, "could have been endless" and resulted in no one taking any action "while exterminations were taking place in Kosovo on an instalment basis".

He said Nato had conducted two "assessments" of its strategy in Kosovo. The first considered a "non-permissive environment", taking control by force of "just Kosovo" or Belgrade and much of Serbia as well. The first, he said, would require a force of 75,000; the second 200,000.

The other scenario presupposed a "permissive environment" and estimated a force of 28,000-30,000 troops for peace-keeping.

General Shelton warned that if ground troops were to be sent, the time from dispatch to deployment would be "long drawn out", and that nothing could be decided without the "support of Congress and the American people", otherwise it would "fracture the alliance".

The current position, he said, was that "the North Atlantic Council has said specifically not to commence planning [for ground troops]".

In his breakdown of the operation so far, General Shelton said the US had deployed 463 planes in the region, 247 of

them fighters and bombers, 17 reconnaissance and the remainder support aircraft. Other Nato countries had contributed 217 planes, the majority fighters. US naval forces included an aircraft-carrier, two submarines and several minesweepers in the Adriatic.

It would not be easy, he told senators, to complete the operation with air power alone. "It will take a long time, but the military objective as outlined can be accomplished".

There had been a three-phase plan: 1. to create the conditions to facilitate the operation; 2. to "isolate Serbian forces" and 3. "to dominate or decimate those forces". At each stage the hope was that Mr Milosevic would choose a political settlement.

The first stage entailed the use of mainly long-range missiles and precision bombing to neutralise Yugoslavia's Russian, British and US-supplied air defences. In the second stage the range of ground targets had been increased to

include the headquarters of the army and police. Yugoslavia's integrated command and control system, its military supply system, and the road and rail network. The third stage would concentrate on forces in the field. "That is about where we are now".

Cataloguing the damage, General Shelton said 50 per cent of Yugoslavia's frontline fighters had been destroyed with the bulk of surface-to-air missile storage sites, military headquarters buildings and barracks belonging to the police and army. A "considerable amount" of the country's fuel supplies had been destroyed and three-quarters of munitions production had been "damaged or destroyed" in all areas of Serbia.

Mr Cohen said it was wrong to believe the Kosovo Liberation Army had been destroyed; it had lost maybe "several hundred" men, but was fast being replenished as Kosovars were "radicalised" by the Yugoslav assault. One objective, General Shelton noted, was to "degrade" the Yugoslav

forces to where "the balance of power shifts between uniformed members of the Serb forces and the KLA".

On the risk that Russia could become involved, Mr Cohen reassured senators that the US had no evidence that Russia was sending war supplies to Yugoslavia. But he disclosed that Washington had warned Moscow of "serious consequences" if the intelligence-gathering ship it was sending to the Adriatic was used to convey information to the Serbs.

ANALYSIS

Nato caught between conflicting strategies



ANNE MCELVOY

NATO'S PRESENT dilemma is rendered brutally clear in the pictures of dismembered bodies from Wednesday's bombed convoys. The casualties are a direct consequence of the decision to widen the scope and intensity of the air attacks. Yet without this extension of the bombing targets, the Alliance was making no real impact on the Serbian military infrastructure, nor on its brutality over Kosovo.

The damage inflicted from the air to the enemy's operational capability is a necessary prerequisite to any final conflict. But it takes a lot of air power to dent a really powerful military machine. The more intense the bombing becomes, the more inevitable the risk of unintended fatalities. Harsh but true.

After three weeks of engagement, Nato is stuck in the middle of two strategies without clarity about what the end game will look like, or how it intends to get there. There has never been a war when the generals were so hidebound by their government masters. Political reluctance to address the question of how and when ground troops will be committed means that Nato's only explanation for what it is doing - and for what went wrong this week - is incomplete.

Officially, the strategy is simply, in Robin Cook's words, "to continue until the job is finished". But it was always improbable that bombing alone would finish the job. Early optimism that any show of force would stay Milosevic's bloody hand in Kosovo proved wrong. So the raids were stepped up, targets increased in order to cause maximum damage. This makes sense as a preparation for sending in ground troops.

It is harder to justify if this goal has not been made clear - and indeed, is still officially denied - and when we are still reduced to having to guess the ultimate intentions of the Alliance by reading between the lines of politicians' speeches. Air power, for all the advances in technology, cannot tell Serb-commandeered trucks or tractors from those

occupied by Kosovan refugees. As the pressure intensifies on the Serbian forces and their petrol supplies run out, they will commandeer more civilian vehicles. From the Serb point of view, there is every reason to expose fleeing refugees to Nato attack.

As both George Robertson and Robin Cook showed when they spoke with palpable strain of Wednesday's incident, just two days after civilian deaths on the bombed train, the simple mantra that the air attacks must continue because that is what we started, sounds less convincing when Nato has killed the very civilians it went to war to save. We are uncomfortably reminded of the Catch-22 logic of the American spokesman in Vietnam who announced: "We could only save the village by destroying it." Public faith in Nato could decline sharply if its actions are seen to produce diminishing returns or to lack the clarity of a crusade. The Alliance never looked so vulnerable as in its first ill-considered attempt to spin the early news of the disaster. The public in America and Europe knows that Serbia's heavy-handed propaganda is mendacious: it requires a higher standard of honesty from the Alliance.

At the Brussels summit, Europe showed a united front not least because EU countries learned from the humiliation of Bosnia that they have nothing to gain by parting company from the Americans at a time of crisis in Europe. But there are differences of nuance which need to be addressed soon. Far from being, as his critics carped, Bill Clinton's poodle,

Tony Blair has the far greater crusader's instinct and desire to move the conflict along to a conclusion. Officially, of course, there is no distinction between the British and US positions. But the view that ground troops are a necessity is acknowledged today more readily in London than Washington. The longer a decision is postponed, the more potential there is for Nato countries to develop their own ideas of how the conflict should end. Bill Clinton was less than enthusiastic about the German plan to halt air strikes if Serb forces began withdrawing from Kosovo. Nervousness in Europe about the winability of the war is the greatest risk to Alliance unity.

In all likelihood, ground troops will be the last chapter - or rather the beginning of a whole new book. The remaining question is how they will get there, and under what circumstances. The first option is an all-out offensive, which has hitherto been deemed too risky. The second is if southern Kosovo is abandoned by the Serbs, so that Nato can move in without an offensive against Milosevic. Hence Mr Cook's prediction that there "may be circumstances in which one could envisage an international protection force going in without a formal treaty arrangement, but with no resistance on the ground". The third option is to allow the Russians a greater role. Moscow and Nato would move into Kosovo together, the Russians guaranteeing Serb security in return for partition - the option Mr Blair appeared to dismiss.

It falls to America to decide how this will end. Up to now, President Clinton's dominant consideration has been not to risk US casualties. But there is another imperative for a White House incumbent anxious to salvage the reputation of his presidency and bequeath the Democrats a victory: namely to ensure he is not seen to have led America into humiliation. Unless Nato sets out what it means by victory and how it intends to achieve it, it may well be seen to have lost the war that does not speak its name.

THE BALKAN QUESTION

KEY ISSUES BEHIND THE WAR EXPLAINED

Nato's bomb hit a farm "compound". But why were the refugees in a walled compound to start with?

Kosovar Albanians have always lived on farms with high walls and wooden gates, sealed off from the world.

When you travelled across Kosovo you could often tell the nationality of the owner by whether the house was open or shut off. One reason for

these huge medieval-looking stockades is that rural Albanians live in extended families, so they need a lot of space. Another is Muslim conservatism; rural Kosovars do not like their wives and daughters to be seen by outsiders.

For Kosovo Albanians, the outside world in the form of the Serbian authorities has always been a hostile force, so the Kosovars feel safer behind their high walls.

Have Albanians always lived in Kosovo?

Serbs and Albanians argue over which community first settled Kosovo, but there is no doubt that it was mainly Serb in the Middle Ages, when their princes built many monasteries there.

The Albanians became the majority under the five-century rule of the Ottomans, which lasted until 1912 when Serbia retook the province in the first Balkan

war. From then until the 1930s the Serbs tried to resettle the province, but the experiment collapsed in the Second World War and Tito forbade the pre-war colonists to return.

Although some Albanians settled in Kosovo after the war, the real reason for the steep rise in the Albanian population was their birthrate, which is the highest in Europe.

MARCUS TANNER

Readers donate over £500,000

DONATIONS FROM Independent readers are still pouring in for the Kosovo refugees: more than £500,000 has been raised since the appeal was launched a fortnight ago.

A spokesman for the Disasters Emergency Committee, which is co-ordinating the appeal, said: "We have been overwhelmed by the response... The money will be used... for food, blankets, first aid and emergency shelters. It will also help to pay for sanitation and water-purification equipment - vital requirements if the refugee camps are to avoid falling foul of disease."

More than 500,000 Kosovar Albanians have fled or been forced from their homes by

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Serb "ethnic cleansing" of the province. Many are in camps in Macedonia, others have fled to Albania and thousands of others have been flown to countries in the West.

TIMETABLE: DAY 23

Thursday 15th April

12.00-3.00am: Shelling around the border point of Morina, the main route out of Kosovo for 300,000 refugees in recent weeks.

12.30am: Five explosions heard in central Belgrade.

1.35am: Nato missiles reported to have landed in Samaila, west of Kraljevo.

3.30am: Tanjug reports seven explosions in and around Nis and says a bridge in Jasika was destroyed.

9.00-11.11am: Machine gun and artillery fire continues along the Yugoslav and Albanian border.

10.00am: Tanjug reports three blasts in Pristina.

1.00pm: Nato says a bomb from a plane appeared to have mistakenly hit a refugee convoy.

2.15pm: Nato "deeply regretted" causing civilian deaths in the convoy attack but stressed that strikes against Yugoslav military targets would continue.

3.00pm: The US signals that the Nato air campaign could stretch into summer.

5.45pm: OSCE announces five members of KLA were killed and eight wounded in fighting along the border of Yugoslavia and Albania, earlier in the day.

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Straw agrees to Pinochet's extradition

THE FORMER Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet will face extradition proceedings to Spain, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, ruled yesterday.

The decision led to bitter re-primations from General Pinochet's supporters, including a virulent personal attack on Mr Straw by Baroness Thatcher, who accused him of putting his "political ambitions over his duties and so demeaning his office".

But the torture and rape victims of the general's secret police, and human rights activists in Britain and abroad, welcomed the ruling as another blow against regimes which oppress their peoples.

The issuing of a fresh "authority to proceed on extradition" is likely to mean that the General Pinochet, 83, will be sent to Spain on charges of torture and conspiracy to torture.

Two panels of law lords have now ruled that he does not have immunity from prosecution as a former head of state, and it is seen as highly unlikely that a magistrates' court will overturn those rulings.

Rather than examining each charge in detail, the court will have to decide whether the crimes the general is accused of are extraditable under the European Convention on Extradition.

An extradition hearing at London's Bow Street magistrates' court was adjourned until 30 April. James Lewis, for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), said that when the hearing resumes he will ask for a committal date to be set.

The Home Secretary, perhaps mindful that whatever decision he took would be controversial, took the unusual step of making public a list of 36 reasons why he had ruled in favour of an extradition hearing. His statement also stressed the

BY KIM SENGUPTA

decision "was taken personally by the Secretary of State".

In their ruling on 24 March, the law lords stated that General Pinochet could only be extradited on offences carried out after December 1988, when Britain ratified the UN Torture Convention, thereby slashing the 32 charges on the warrant sheet to just two. They also invited the Home Secretary to consider the granting of an authority to proceed afresh.

The Spanish investigative



Pinochet: Facing hearing in London on 30 April

judge, Baltasar Garzon, acting on behalf of Spain, then sent the CPS 43 additional charges of torture subsequent to December 1988. Many of these, as well as the cases of thousands who "disappeared" under the military regime can be added to the list General Pinochet faces when charges are laid formally on 30 April.

Mr Straw received representations from lawyers acting for General Pinochet, the CPS, human rights bodies including Amnesty International, and the Chilean and Spanish governments. He also received "material" from the Foreign

Office and the Ministry of Defence, which is known to have been concerned about arms deals with Chile being put on hold following the general's arrest.

The Home Secretary stated that the charges, although truncated by the law lords, were still extremely serious and warranted an extradition hearing. He rejected the assertion by the general's lawyers that he should not be charged because after December 1988, torture was no longer widespread. He also rejected their plea that the general should be freed on the compassionate grounds of health and age. Requests by the Chilean government that he be sent back to Chile to face possible legal proceedings were also refused.

Supporters of the former dictator lined up to attack Mr Straw. Baroness Thatcher, who recently made a televised gesture of taking tea with General Pinochet, denounced the decision as "a vindictive political act". She said: "His consideration of the arguments seems to have been superficial and inadequate. This is not the decision of a fair-minded man."

Lord Lamont, the former chancellor, said: "Jack Straw knows that in the end, the courts will free General Pinochet, but only after tens of millions of pounds of taxpayers' money has been spent."

In Spain, Judge Garzon stated he was "cautiously satisfied" with Mr Straw's decision, but acknowledged that there was a long legal road ahead.

Amnesty International, which had appeared as intervenors in court requesting the general's extradition, said: "The victims of Pinochet are a huge step closer to justice."

Leading article; Steve Richards; Review, page 3



Pinochet opponents in London celebrating yesterday's decision Peter Macdiarmid

'I helped my patients to die,' says GP

A DOCTOR accused of murdering one of his terminally ill patients said he had "no problem" with helping his patients to die, a court was told yesterday.

Dr John Moor, 52, known by his second name David, denies murdering 85-year-old George Liddell. Mr Liddell, a retired ambulance driver who suffered from cancer of the colon, died at his daughter's home in Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne, on 19 July 1997.

James Goss QC, for the prosecution, told Newcastle Crown Court that Dr Moor was interviewed by Rachel Ellis, a reporter with the Press Association, on 20 July 1997, following a newspaper article in which the former United Nations medical director, Dr Michael Irwin, said he had helped patients to die.

Mr Goss said: "In the interview with Miss Ellis, Dr Moor said that he had given two doses of diamorphine to two of his patients in the past week."

"He admitted he had helped many patients to die in the last 30 years, and said he 'aggressively supported Dr Irwin'."

The jury was then shown a video of a television interview with the BBC that Dr Moor took part in later that day.

In the interview, Dr Moor was asked again if he had helped these patients to die and he replied: "Many times over the past 30 years. But I could put no numerical figure on it."

"I address the problem and the needs of the patient with care and compassion."

When asked by the interviewer what he did next, Dr Moor said: "We go in with a fairly high dose of diamorphine."

"I am not a member of the BMA [British Medical Association] and do not subscribe to their views. I probably am breaking the law, I'm on the fringe of breaking the law. I would be very surprised if I had to defend myself in court."

"I can't be struck off be-

cause I'm dealing with pain and with suffering and I'm dealing with the pain, and I have no problem with it."

Mr Goss said it was a simple case of murder and not about euthanasia. "Once a doctor decides to terminate life, not only is it contrary to the BMA's views, it constitutes, in our view, murder."

"This is not a trial about the merits or de-merits of euthanasia, it is a straightforward alleged case of a doctor deliberately ending the life of a patient. We do not allege he was a callous, wicked man. Quite the contrary, by all accounts he was a caring, hard-working practitioner, well-liked by his patients. But no one man, whatever his station in life, is above the law."

Twenty minutes into the trial, one of Dr Moor's supporters in the public gallery was ejected from the court after an outburst. The man jumped to his feet and shouted to Mr Justice Hooper: "You are persecuting a wonderful man of courage, sir."

The judge ordered him to leave the court, not to return before the end of the trial and warned everyone else in the courtroom that any similar outbursts would be treated in the same way.

It emerged later that the supporter who was ejected from the court was Dr Irwin.

Mr Goss said: "The prosecution case is that Dr Moor made a conscious decision to end Mr Liddell's life and administered large amounts of diamorphine to that end."

Dr Moor, of Hexham, Northumberland, was arrested in July 1997 after Mr Liddell's body was withheld by the coroner and examined by police pathologists. He was charged with murder in June 1998.

The case continues today. It is scheduled to last up to three weeks.

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Union leader quits Labour Party

LABOUR SUFFERED a blow in the Scottish Parliament election campaign yesterday following the resignation of a top union official fed up with "defending the indefensible" on public spending. Confirmation by economists that England is faring better in the UK cash share-out, added to the discomfort.

Mark Irvine, head of Scottish local government for Unison, said Labour had "lost its moral centre" while trade unions had become little more than a handy milch cow. His protest was a welcome relief to the SNP, the party under most pressure.

Labour and Unison tried to

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

play down the resignation, MP Douglas Alexander, a key campaign strategist, said Mr Irvine's decision was a matter for him and had no bearing on the union or the party.

Labour is under attack in Scotland for its reliance on Tory-inspired private finance initiatives to build schools and hospitals. Next week trade union leaders will call for an end to private funding, which they argue stores up high pay-back costs for the future. Mr Irvine says union concerns were ignored. Mr

Alexander said: "If people choose to make one of the issues of this election Labour's commitment to deliver 100 new school developments and eight new hospital developments, then that is territory on which we are happy to fight."

Labour's attempts to show how Scotland benefits from higher per capita spending than England were undermined by a report suggesting the gap is narrowing. Spending rises in Scotland are being squeezed much tighter north of the border, says Professor Brian Ashcroft, head of Strathclyde University's respected

Fraser of Allander Institute. He says the £4bn Labour earmarked for Scottish education, health and other services translates into an average real budget increase of 1.6 per cent a year up to 2001-02. Comparable real term growth in spending in the rest of the UK would be 4.4 per cent a year.

Scotland is feeling the "Barnett squeeze", the effect of changes in the so-called Barnett formula determining Scotland's share of UK public spending. But there is still a big gap in Scotland's favour.

Andrew Wilson, of SNP, said the report was a devastating

blow to Labour's campaign. During Labour's first three years, spending in Scotland was £1bn less than in the last three years of the Tories, he said. "These figures show there is no public spending argument in favour of the union."

Wendy Alexander, tipped as finance minister in the first home-rule government, said: "Scotland benefits from 20 per cent higher spending on health, 26 per cent on higher education and 39 per cent on trade and industry. That is part of the argument Labour is advancing that we are stronger together, weaker apart."

Brown: Say no to borders within Britain

SCOTTISH OR Welsh independence would create races of "foreigners" within Britain, the Chancellor Gordon Brown, suggested last night. Mr Brown mounted a passionate defence of the union in a speech to a conference on "new Britain" at the London School of Economics.

"No citizen of Britain should be a foreigner in Britain, no neighbour a stranger in Britain," he said. "No barriers, geographical, social or cultural, should stand in the way of opportunity for every citizen of Britain."

Mr Brown drew on the findings of a survey on Britishness carried out for the conference to illustrate his case against Scottish or Welsh independence. More than eight out of 10 people in Scotland and almost nine out of 10 in Wales be-

BY FRAN ABRAMS
AND PAUL WAUGH

lieved it was important for England, Scotland and Wales to work together to be a strong force in the new global economy, he said.

"The reality is not simply that we share a common island,

a common language and a common history but a broad range of defining values – a commitment to openness and internationalism, to public service and fair play to creativity and inventiveness, to democracy and tolerance," he said.

The MORI poll, commissioned by left-of-centre eco-

nomics think-tank, the Smith Institute, found that the National Health Service was seen as more "British" than the Army, BBC or the House of Commons. The NHS was viewed by 71 per cent as the country's best asset, way ahead of any other national body. Just 33 per cent believed that the

Commons was Britain's best asset, with 36 per cent for the BBC and 51 per cent for the Army.

The survey also found that 67 per cent of Scots and 66 per cent of Welsh respondents described "Britishness" as important to them, with most supporting the idea of a United Kingdom.

WEDNESDAY'S LOTTERY UPDATE

Draw date: 14/04/99. The winning numbers: 5, 9, 12, 25, 30, 32. Bonus number: 38.

Total Sales: £27,781,564. Prize Fund: £12,501,703 (45% of ticket sales).

CATEGORY	NO. OF WINNERS	AMOUNT FOR EACH WINNER	TOTAL EACH TIER
Match 6 (Jackpot)	6	£507,371	£3,044,226
Match 5 plus bonus ball	13	£72,052	£936,676
Match 5	961	£815	£780,665
Match 4	43,661	£29	£1,266,169
Match 3	684,742	£10	£6,847,420
TOTALS	709,373		£12,479,356

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Breakage (prizes rounded down to nearest £1): £22,345.

Maybe, just maybe. THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

In the event of any discrepancy in the above, the data contained in Camelot central computer system shall prevail.



An archaeologist getting a close-up of the skeleton of the woman who is believed to have lived in the fourth century AD. Glynn Griffiths

Roman aristocrat's body found in mud

ARCHAEOLOGISTS WERE yesterday examining the skeleton of a wealthy young Roman girl, whose ornate coffin was opened after 1,600 years buried in the mud under London.

The lead coffin was found within a stone sarcophagus which was unearthed during the excavation of an old Roman cemetery in Spitalfields. It was opened by a team of archaeologists and revealed the almost perfectly preserved skeleton of a woman in her early 20s. She died in the first half of the fourth century AD.

She was lying in a bed of silt, which archaeologists are hoping will have preserved other objects. They are now battling against time to find anything else before the silt dries out and turns to dust. Initial discoveries include leaves in the coffin, which may have been a burial wreath, and archaeologists are examining the silt for bits of hair, pollen or insects which would indicate the time of year she was buried. Over the

next few weeks scientists will examine the coffin in minute detail for any clues about the woman's identity and way of life.

Taryn Nixon, the chief archaeologist, said the woman was certainly from a wealthy family. "She was part of the rich landed ruling classes that ran the country under Roman law," she said. "They made their money from agriculture and land rents from the people that farmed on the land."

Her left arm was folded across her chest - a sign of Christianity - but the scallop shells on the coffin and the presence of grave goods indicate pagan beliefs as well.

What is certain is that the woman would have lived in a large square villa surrounding a courtyard, probably in the city of Londinium. Roman law stated that human remains had to be buried outside the town. Their houses were richly decorated with mosaics and

wall paintings and the furniture was mainly wooden or wicker. They would also have had window panes made from blown glass. The woman would have visited the public baths with her friends to socialise, but would have had her own private bath for washing. It is not known whether she was buried as a wife or a wealthy man's daughter but examination should reveal the cause of death, whether she was pregnant or died in childbirth.

Whatever secrets remain to be revealed, Ms Nixon said the discovery of the sarcophagus, which is the first to be found in Britain since 1877, would shed a ray of light onto the Roman way of life. "The way in which the living treat their dead tells us a great deal about them," she said. "It is an incredibly rare find because it has not been robbed as many other graves were." The woman's remains are on view at the Museum of London until Sunday 25 April.

MP wins appeal but still barred

UNCERTAINTY surrounds the future of former Labour MP Fiona Jones, despite her victorious appeal yesterday against a conviction for election expenses fraud.

The Government initially believed it had been spared a potentially damaging by-election when the Court of Appeal overturned the guilty verdict.

Ms Jones, who won Newark at the 1997 general election with a majority of 3,000, emerged jubilant from court after the ruling and vowed to enter the Commons as soon as possible.

But the judges refused to rule immediately whether Ms Jones could be reinstated as an MP and said decision lay with Betty Boothroyd, Speaker of the Commons. The Speaker's office said it would need detailed legal advice first, but it would be "very unwise" of Ms Jones to take her seat immediately.

Ms Jones, 42, was convicted last month at Nottingham Crown Court of knowingly making a false declaration of election expenses. She was ordered to do 100 hours community service and the seat was declared vacant by the Speaker.

But the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, sitting with Mr Justice Moses and Mr Justice Penny-Davey, yesterday said the judge misdirected the jury. The judges indicated they would also be allowing the appeal of Mrs Jones's election agent Des Whiche, 73, who had been found guilty of the same offence, and fined £750.

Ms Jones and Mr Whiche were alleged to have omitted or under-declared significant amounts of expenditure, in particular on party campaign offices, on their election expenses form. Mrs Jones's counsel, Roy Amiot QC, told the Appeal Court that the trial judge, Mr Justice Jowitt, should have told the jury that an election expense,

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

under the Act, was confined to the promotion of the candidate's "personal" candidacy.

Lord Bingham said that the consequences of the quashed conviction raised "potentially far-reaching questions", but his view was that he and his fellow judges should not rule without first referring to the Attorney-General John Morris and the Speaker.

Lord Bingham said that the court would get into "deep waters" if it started making orders



Fiona Jones: Immediate return "very unwise"

about the internal regulations of the Commons. In what Labour claimed was a clear steer in favour of reinstatement, he said the consequences of allowing the appeal were the same as in any other case.

Mrs Jones, the first sitting MP to be convicted of electoral fraud for 140 years, said after the hearing that she had been told by the Chief Whip that no writ would now be served for a by-election.

"I have had a very raw deal and have been very grateful for all the support from my family and my constituents. It has been a difficult ordeal," she said.

BBC releases Peter Cook tape

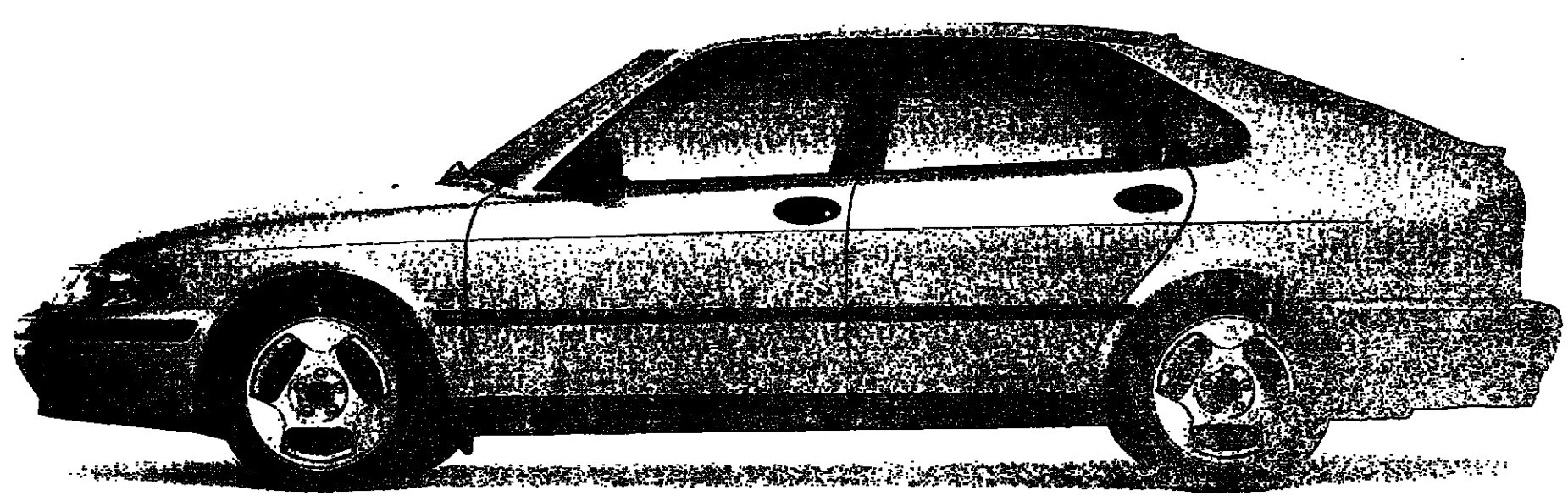
CHRIST PRACTISING resurrection by dropping dead regularly as a child and an ice dance extravaganza with Esther Williams swimming under the frozen surface are the more lucid topics covered by comedians Peter Cook and Chris Morris in Cook's last radio performance.

The conversations are released this week on tape by the BBC after being recorded in 1994 for a little-known series on Radio 3 called *Why Bother?* The two were unscripted and had satirist Morris asking absurd questions of Cook, who played his oddball creation Sir Arthur Streeb-Greebling.

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

The conversations were recorded after Cook and Morris were brought together by the comedy production company TalkBack. Their surreal interview wanders from Betty Grable's use of steroids to lengthen her legs and Cook's repeated attempts to begin an anecdote about bee-keeping.

Peter Cook, who was responsible for the satire boom in the early Sixties, died in 1995. Morris, who began his career as a prankster on local radio, gained notoriety with *Boss Nipper*, his satire on the media.



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Lesson in smugness from Mr Brown's little treasures

THE COMPETITION is pretty stiff but I think the Treasury frontbench team may be the smuggest, most self-satisfied ministerial grouping in the current Government. I should note before I proceed that there are people here with less right to hold the trophy than others. Barbara Roche, for instance, does not always pull her weight when it comes to clichés and condescension. And, paradoxically, the team captain sometimes lets the side down a bit too. This is not because Gordon Brown can't curl a lip with the best of them, but because there is still some quality of unfettered authenticity to his arrogance. As he

smears back at the opposition or flings some dog-eared riposte there is a human flair to his performance which is missing from Alan Milburn's work on the wing. You feel that Mr Milburn works for every point he scores, an admirable dedication to the craft which should not go unrecorded.

My grounds for exempting Ms Roche, incidentally, can't fairly be described as anything other than prejudice. For one thing I have noticed that I don't grind my teeth when she stands at the despatch box, for another I saw her recently on Muswell Hill High Street being nice to the children she was with. She may find

it unfair to be singled out like this but I can't dodge the facts: for her, at least, I have first-hand evidence of humanity. I realise it's possible that the supremely irritating mannerisms of her two female colleagues in the Treasury might also conceal an off-the-pitch normality. But, if so, all I can say is that they conceal it with an admirable professionalism.

When I watch Dawn Primarolo at the despatch box I can't quite shake a vision of her dressed in a puce courier's uniform and surrounded by disgruntled charter passengers demanding to know when their refreshment vouchers will arrive. She clutches at her clipboard with white

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

knuckles, voice hovering between synthetic mollification and panic, her stresses becoming ever more stressed as the temperature rises.

Patricia Hewitt, on the other hand, adopts a different role, that of a veteran nursery school teacher – a woman who thinks of herself as having a special way with the little ones. The ghastly singsong in which she delivers New Labour's bedtime story is accompanied at all times by a fixed smile, an acknowledgement that you need lots of patience if you're going to work with toddlers.

Sometimes it is necessary to be stern, of course. When one Tory MP asked an impertinent question about "dirty foreign trucks" she promptly smacked his knuckles for xenophobia. This was a tiny bit unfair, since he was talking about air pol-

lution and the trucks he had in mind were undoubtedly both foreign and dirty. But discipline must be maintained and virtue encouraged. Fortunately he was followed by a good boy, Ben Bradshaw, who earned several gold stars for coming to school on a bicycle and restored Ms Hewitt's sunny mood. It's pupils like little Ben who make the whole job worthwhile. Or like Paul Goggins, who later invoked a genuine schoolboy in a syrupy question about what representations the Chancellor had received from children with regard to debt relief. He himself had received a postcard from seven-year-old Joshua Dean

saying "Please help cancel the debt". The Chancellor briefly played Jemima, promising to tell off part of the IMF's gold mountain to fund little Joshua's dream, at which point nervous that a moppet-gap might be opening up between the parties, Nick St Aubyn stood up to make the implausible assertion that "there are lots of children round the country who support the last Conservative government's efforts to reduce debt". We were spared the views of primary school children on the new fiscal regime for British shipping or the withholding tax, but if this sort of thing carries on Ms Hewitt's peculiar skills may come in useful.



The Tory party leader, William Hague, listening to the concerns of road hauliers in Aberdeenshire yesterday PA

Hague backs plan to elect 'senators'

WILLIAM HAGUE is to outflank Tony Blair over reform of the House of Lords by endorsing radical plans, published today, for a "senate" with many of its members elected by the public.

A commission that was set up by the Conservative leader has proposed two options for a new second chamber, which would both involve some "senators" being directly elected for a 15-year term of office.

Today's report will increase the pressure on the Government to beef up its plans for

LOARDS REFORM

By ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

Lords reform. Although some peers could be nominated by the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies under Mr Blair's plans, he opposes the direct election of peers on the grounds that it would undermine the House of Commons.

Mr Hague will finalise the Opposition's blueprint shortly after studying the findings of the constitutional commission, that was chaired by Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former lord chancellor.

Close allies suggested that Mr Hague was ready to endorse the commission's approach by calling for a partly-elected second chamber. But he may stop short of demanding a wholly elected House of Lords, which would be opposed by many Conservative MPs.

"This report strongly steers Conservatives towards solutions which listen to public concern that the second chamber should be independent and chosen fairly," Mr Hague said last night.

Lord Mackay rejected the

Government's plans to curb the existing powers of the Lords but agreed with ministers that the Commons should retain its primacy.

He said the new look second chamber should broadly retain its existing powers, but that they might need strengthening in future. Under Lord Mackay's plans, a "Senator of Parliament" (or SP) would enjoy similar pay and allowances to an MP. Although the SPs would have to stand down after serving 15 years, they could become MPs at that point, and Lord Mackay suggested that being a senator could be a stepping stone for aspiring MPs.

Under the most radical of his two options, 480 senators would be elected by 80 constituencies each with six members, who would be elected in pairs at three successive general elections. Another 15 members could be appointed by the Prime Minister during each five-year Parliament, to serve as ministers.

Under option two, a partly-elected chamber would include 150 senators chosen by an appointments commission; 99 representing the Scottish,

Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies and English regions; another 99 elected in groups of 33 at each general election in proportion to the total votes cast and 100 appointed for life.

The Conservative commission proposed that the law lords should retain their seats but said that the 26 Church of England bishops who currently sit in the Upper House should lose that automatic right, although the appointments commission could consider sending them to the Lords.

Lord Mackay said yesterday that his proposals would strengthen the second chamber's advisory role, increase its legitimacy and bolster Parliament's standing – without threatening the Commons.

"We have looked to create models that bring in members with special expertise or experience and ensure that no one party is able to have an in-built majority," he said. "We have tried to ensure that its membership does not directly mimic the representation of the Commons of the day and that members are able to feel a greater level of independence from party machines."

Tory attacked over Belize shipping links

THE CONSERVATIVE treasurer was attacked in the House of Lords yesterday for his links to a "flag of convenience" shipping register with one of the worst safety records in the world.

A transport minister condemned the record of the Belize register, which is part owned by Michael Ashcroft. Mr Ashcroft has made major donations to the Conservative Party and took charge of its finances last year.

Lord Whitty, a transport minister and former Labour Party general secretary, said it seemed Tory funding had changed little.

"In past life I have had cause to look at the finances of the Conservative Party and the people involved. It does appear that things haven't changed," he said. "It is true that the Belize register has a pretty poor record and there has been considerable anxiety expressed in the maritime community about that."

Lord Whitty was answering a question from Lord Razzall, the Liberal Democrat treasurer, about the sinking of a Belize-registered ship called the *Rema* last year in which five British crew members died.

SAFETY AT SEA

By FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

Lord Razzall said Belize had one of the worst safety records of any "flag of convenience," and asked Lord Whitty to press Mr Ashcroft to improve it.

Despite being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which demands links between ships and their countries of registration, the Belize register has many ships which have little or no connection to the Central American state.

Lord Razzall said if ships were genuinely linked to the countries where they were registered, safety standards would be better and accidents such as the sinking of the *Rema* would happen less often.

Lord Brabazon of Tara, the Conservative transport spokesman, said it was wrong to draw any conclusion about the accident before an investigators' report was published. "There is a very tenuous link between Mr Michael Ashcroft and his holding in the Belize register and the fact that this ship tragically sank," he said.

THE HOUSE



Death warning

LABOUR BACKBENCHERS called for a statement on the deaths of refugees in allied bombings. Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, warned: "This will inevitably happen again and again."

Asylum on 50p

Labour backbenchers criticised the Government's Asylum and Immigration Bill because it would leave asylum seekers with as little as 50p-a-day to spend on each of their children. Present benefits will be replaced with hostel accommodation, food vouchers.

Today's agenda

Commons – 9.30am Football (Offences and Disorder) Bill, Licensing (Young Persons) Bill. Debate on cervical cancer screening procedures. Lords – not sitting

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Pinochet cost

LORD LAMONT of Lerwick the former Conservative Chancellor, has tabled 70 questions concerning the case of General Pinochet since last December, which has cost the taxpayer £2,050, Home Office Minister Lord Williams of Mostyn, disclosed.

Allergy move

MINISTERS ARE drawing up measures to give an even greater emphasis to the National Health Service's treatment of allergy by recognising it as a specialty in its own right. Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, said.

English Nature calls for GM ban

ENGLISH NATURE yesterday reiterated its call for a five-year ban on the commercial release of genetically modified crops to allow more research on their impact on the environment.

Baroness Young, the Labour peer who chairs the organisation, told MPs that several generations of crops had to be grown before the cumulative effects on wildlife and plants could be assessed.

English Nature caused Tony Blair intense embarrassment earlier this year when it opposed the Government's refusal to impose a moratorium on GM releases.

ENVIRONMENT

By PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

Baroness Young told the Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee that a ban until 2003 would allow more research on results of field trials. She said the trials should be "rigorous" enough to take into account broader ecological and environmental implications of commercial releases.

Dr Keith Duff, English Nature's chief scientist, told the committee that management of the field trials was just as important as the growing itself.

Dixons

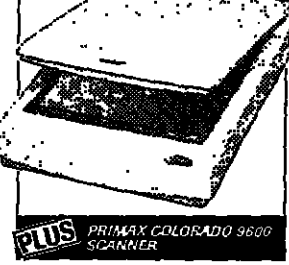
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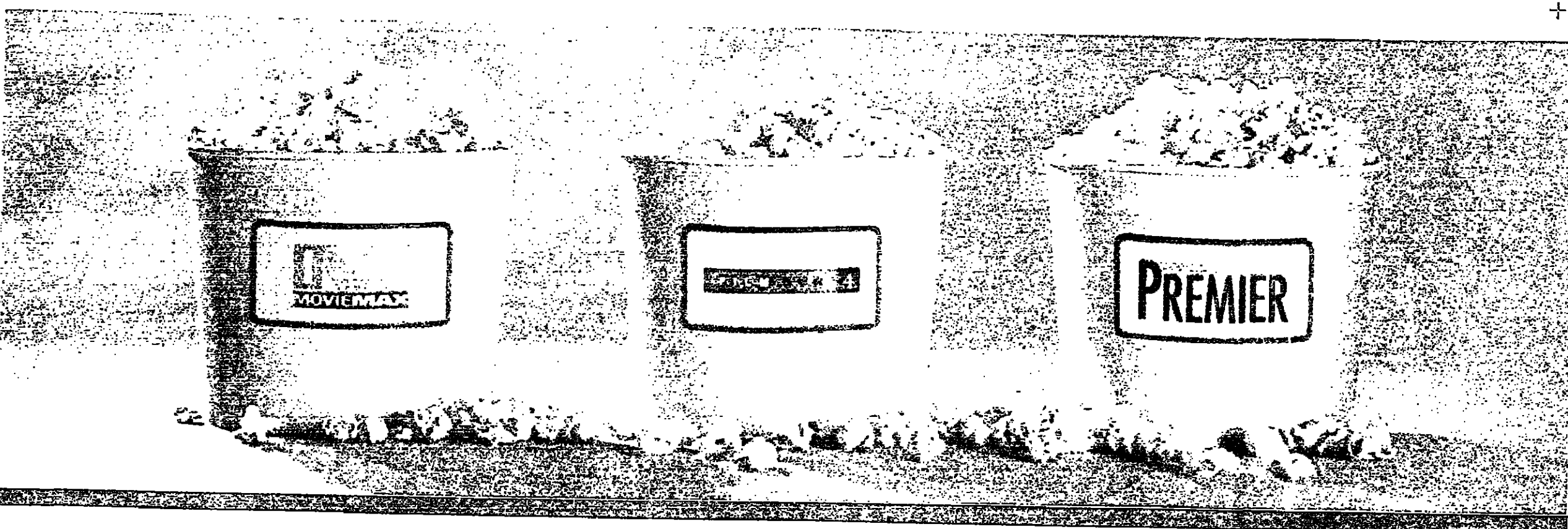
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Liverpool stops at 3.06pm, and looks back in sad anger on the day 96 died

AT SOME time in the early morning the big white clock at the Kop end of Anfield stadium had been stopped to show a time of six minutes past three.

And when that exact minute came in real time yesterday the tall, spindly figure of Ray Lewis, dressed in his referee's strip, walked out to the penalty spot and blew his whistle once - bringing an entire city to a standstill. It could have been seen as almost comical. A bare-legged, elderly man blowing a tin whistle, watched in complete silence by 10,000 people. On the contrary it was deeply moving. Because everybody in Anfield knew that exactly 10 years ago, to the second, the same man had blown the same whistle 65 miles away, at Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield, in a vain attempt to abandon a football match and save the lives of people being slowly crushed to death. His whistle came too late that day. Ninety-six people, most of them under 20 years old, were either dead or dying.

Yesterday's symbolic re-enactment was the signal for the entire population of Liverpool to stop in their tracks. And they did. Buses, taxis, lorries and cars stopped where they stood. And for sixty seconds the only sound was the tolling of the cathedral bell.

All morning, in freezing rain, thousands had walked up the hill to Anfield and the young fans in their red and white scarves made the Kop, as always, a sea of colour. Only the great roaring of the fans was absent. Long silences punctuated the prayers and the singing of a gospel choir. The words were conciliatory and respectful. Above everything else on this mournful day, we were witnessing a city honouring those who had died so obscenely, so needlessly. But underneath it all there was still, after all these years, more than a hint of a powerful rage that justice has still not been done. That there are still scores to be settled.

And after an hour of hearing the comforting words and music of "Abide With Me" and "Amazing Grace", and listening to the words of the great and good of Liverpool hoping for



JAMES DALRYMPLE

eventual release and peace for the victim's families, so we finally got to the hard, unrelenting message that is still being delivered by a community that cannot rest until somebody, somewhere pays the price of the incompetence that cost so many lives.

Trevor Hicks, who watched his two daughters, 19 year-old Sarah, and Vicki, 15, die on the Hillsborough turf, gave the keynote speech yesterday. He began quietly. A long list of thanks to dozens of people. He even made a few jokes, pointing out that the stopping of the big clock meant that he could talk as long as he liked and it would still be the same time. But in the end his anger flooded out. And there was no doubt that 10,000 ordinary Liverpoolians agreed with him.

"Some people," he said, "many in positions of authority, politely say that we should let the tenth anniversary be the end of it. Others are more forthright and come out and say they are sick of Hillsborough. The very bold say they are totally sick of us going on about it. I know I speak for many of the families when I say we agree. We are sick of it too."

"We want to get on with our lives, wrecked as they are. We look forward to some peace and quiet. The achievement of that aim could be hastened if all the obstacles were removed and all the information made available, if the ducking and diving stops - and the people responsible stand up and be counted. Nothing would please us more than an early opportunity to test our case in a court of law."

And that was crux of it. After the hundreds of days of inquiries, coroners' inquests,



"Today is about remembering. We know we cannot get them back and we try to come to terms, we try to understand. We seek answers, the truth, justice" Howard Barlow

books, films and television documentaries, Trevor Hicks and the Hillsborough families - and the entire city of Liverpool - are still unsatisfied. They want to see police officers in the dock, charged with neglect and incompetence. To that end, their move to bring a private prosecution is still grinding its way through the legal process.

His anger, brief and flaring, brought an even deeper silence over the stadium. And then, in a moment, it was gone. "But that is all for another day," he said quietly.

"Today is about remembering the 96, and how we wish things were different. We know we cannot get them back and

we try to come to terms, we try to understand. We seek answers, explanations, the truth, justice." With that he smiled suddenly. And the father who lost his girls on a spring afternoon in Sheffield asked the crowd to get on their feet and sing the song - for more than 30 years the anthem of Liverpool itself - that he says he now loves more than any other.

A mile down the road from Anfield, in a city almost deserted because everybody who could make it was in the stadium, they could hear the crowd roar out the words of "You'll Never Walk Alone".

The last time I stood in Anfield was on the day follow-

ing Hillsborough. Returning yesterday and watching this city once again offering its grief and strength to the world. I thought of that terrible five year period in the late Eighties when the world seemed to produce one disaster after another.

Working for this newspaper during those years I had seen the flames that devoured the Piper Alpha rig, and the hundreds of bodies being brought ashore. I was there the night when an escalator at King's Cross tube station was turned into a blowtorch. I had followed the murderous path of a crazed gunman through the streets of Hungerford. I had seen the upturned hull of the *Herald of*

Free Enterprise outside Zeebrugge and the lines of bodybags lying in a warehouse. And I had looked down into the great black hole in Lockerbie and seen the scores of naked bodies lying scattered on a golf course and hanging from the rooftops. All of these catastrophes were caused either by the insane actions of men or a random act of fate, involving usually a measure of neglect or incompetence. And those who had perished were just going about their business, travelling home, walking the streets of their town.

But Hillsborough was different from the rest. The 96 people who had the life crushed out

of them that day were a complete and close community, a faithful army of Saturday afternoon pilgrims, who died because they loved something.

They were the lifeblood, financially and physically, of an industry that was still, in 1989, greedy, corrupt, smug and incompetent. It could even be murderous.

We had seen death on a massive scale in death-trap stadiums from Ibrox to Heysel and Bradford with hundreds crushed and burnt to death. And at Hillsborough Stadium we saw the final flowering of their contempt as they forced the supporters into cages and squeezed them to death. Yesterday was all about remembrance. It did credit to a city and its people in its simplicity and reverence. But under the surface the rage and the cries for revenge and punishment are still strong. It may be that someday those now broken and despised men, like Chief Superintendent David Duckenfield and several of his named colleagues, may have to answer for their disastrous decisions on that day. Others may have to explain the lies and deceit that was rife among South Yorkshire police in the following years.

But they did not set out to kill anybody on that spring afternoon. It was the Glory Game itself that did that.

TOMORROW IN
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Mandelson talks!



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New Ulster crisis talks called at Number Ten

TONY BLAIR and Bertie Aherne will call Gerry Adams, David Trimble and other key party leaders to crisis talks at Downing Street in an attempt to break the deadlock over the Northern Ireland peace process.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach, who failed to end the impasse over arms decommissioning, agreed to hold the fresh talks after their second meeting in 24 hours last night at No 10.

There was also a hint that the governments are prepared to alter the wording of the Hillsborough Declaration when they meet party leaders on Monday. Mo Mowlam, Secre-

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

tary of State for Northern Ireland, will hold more talks with other party leaders in Belfast.

Conceding that there were "difficulties" in reaching agreement, the Prime Minister's spokesman said the declaration was a draft document, in a clear signal that it could be changed. He remained confident the obstacles could be overcome, providing the momentum was maintained in the peace process.

After an hour-long meeting with Mr Blair, Mr Aherne said: "It is clear to us that the Hillsborough Declaration has not

yet got the widespread support that we would like. As a result, it is clear to us we have not yet reached a form that will give us a consensus that the Good Friday Agreement had. We will have to continue to do that, regardless how difficult that is."

Ms Mowlam said: "There is a determination that no one wants to stop."

Mr Aherne said both governments were committed to achieving implementation of the Good Friday Agreement with the establishment of a new power-sharing executive for Northern Ireland.

Earlier, the Sinn Féin chairman, Mitchell McLaughlin, said the credibility of the Good Fri-

day Agreement had been "seriously eroded" and warned the two governments against "parking" the peace process over the summer months.

David Trimble, the First Minister of Northern Ireland, said that would not happen. However, he said it was now up to Republican leaders to confront the hardliners within their own ranks who, he said, were barring any moves towards decommissioning.

"It is time that the leaders of the republican movement stood up to the handful of paramilitaries in their ranks that are obstructing progress," he said. "It is time they faced down the opposition in their own ranks."

IN BRIEF

Anthony Newley dies of cancer

THE ACTOR, singer and playwright Anthony Newley has died after a long battle with cancer. The 67-year-old former husband of Joan Collins died on Wednesday at his home in Florida. He came to fame playing the Artful Dodger in the 1948 film version of *Oliver Twist*.

Obituary, Review page 6

People's prayer for the millennium

MORE THAN two-thirds of people planning to watch the new year celebrations at the Millennium Dome on television believe there should be a distinctly Christian component to the proceedings, according to a poll by NOP. They wanted a "Christian moment of reflection".

Boy, 13, blinded girl with airgun

A BOY of 13 was yesterday convicted of blinding a newspaper delivery girl, 15, in one eye by firing an air pistol at her. The boy was found guilty at Exeter Crown Court of causing grievous bodily harm in the attack at Paignton, Devon, in May. Sentencing was deferred.

Ambulanceman drops job claim

AN AMBULANCE officer who was sacked over his handling of a case involving two paramedics accused of ignoring a call to a dying man has withdrawn an industrial tribunal claim that he should be given his job back. David Carrington and London Ambulance Service came to an agreement.

'Freelance' vicar arrested

THE REV JONATHAN BLAKE, who calls himself "Britain's first freelance vicar", was arrested for nailing his "95 theses", on the "corrupt and corrupting" church, to the door of Canterbury Cathedral. His C of E licence was withdrawn in 1993 and he works from home in Gillingham, Kent.

Hand transplant possible in UK

THE BRITISH specialist involved in the world's first successful hand transplant, performed in France last year, said yesterday he was ready to do a similar operation in the UK.

Nadey Hakim, surgical director of the transplant unit at St Mary's Hospital, west London, said the success of the operation on Clint Hallam, an Australian, carried out by an international team of surgeons in Lyons last September, had confirmed the surgery was feasible.

Mr Hallam, 48, who lost his arm in an accident with a chainsaw 15 years ago, was given the right forearm and hand of a Frenchman who had died in a motorcycle crash. At first all went well and he was pictured holding a pint of beer.

Earlier this year, after receiving £20,000 from a Sunday newspaper for his story, he travelled to North America and was out of touch with his doctors for more than a month. When he appeared on the CBS TV programme *48 Hours* in

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

New York his hand appeared swollen and he said it was deteriorating. A CBS producer, Joe Halderman, described it as "almost completely dead".

Today, however, the surgical team that carried out the transplant say in *The Lancet* that Mr Hallam and his new hand are doing well. Although patients who have lost hands in accidents have had them re-attached, the transplant of a hand from a donor had not previously been attempted - except once, unsuccessfully, in Ecuador in 1964 - because of fears of rejection.

Professor Jean-Michel Du-bonard, of the Edouard Herriot Hospital, Lyons, and colleagues attribute their success to the development of new immunosuppressant drugs.

Mr Hakim said: "I am putting together a protocol to do [the operation] in London. The only question is when."

Met poised to pay £100,000 to Lawrences

SCOTLAND YARD is preparing to make an unprecedented ex gratia payment, believed to amount to £100,000, to the parents of black student Stephen Lawrence to compensate them for its bungled investigation of his murder.

The Yard confirmed yesterday that discussions were taking place with lawyers for the Lawrence family, but refused to comment on the size of the payment.

Neville and Doreen Lawrence announced their intention to sue the police after the publication of Sir William Macpherson's damning report on the murder investigation in February.

Glen Smyth, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, told BBC Radio yesterday that he thought the Lawrences might be given separate payments.

"I was aware that the Metropolitan Police were talking about a sum in the region of £50,000 but I don't know if that was for each of them or together," he said.

Ros Howells, a friend of the Lawrence family, said that £100,000 was little compared to what they had lost. "I am hoping the lawyers will be able to negotiate a more sensible sum," she said.

BY KATHY MARKS AND IAN BURRELL

She added that the family had been forced to move house and sell their home for a low price. "One could never even begin to calculate the emotional stuff," she said. "You could never compensate anyone for the loss of a son."

News of the negotiations emerged as Gary Dobson, one of the five men suspected of murdering Stephen, took part in a radio phone-in.

Stung by the cynicism that greeted the gang's media debut last week, Dobson submitted himself to live questioning for two hours on Talk Radio yesterday morning.

During a grilling far tougher than the one he was given in his television interview with Martin Bashir last week, Dobson swore "on my mother's life" that he had not killed Stephen.

He said that he had had a black girlfriend for six months when he was 14.

But he refused to take a lie detector test, saying that it would not prove anything.

Numerous callers tried without success to needle Dobson into pointing the finger at the others. "My friends have gone

through the same traumatic experience as I have," he said. "We stand by each other, all five of us, 100 per cent down the middle."

Asked by David, a listener from Manchester, whether he was intimidated by David Norris and two other suspects, Jamie and Neil Acourt, he replied: "Absolutely not. They're good friends of mine. Neil and I have been on holiday together with our girlfriends."

Callers included several former friends from Dobson's schooldays in Eltham, south-east London, including a young black man, Jermaine, who accused him of being an "undercover racist".

"Gary Dobson is a follower and he will follow the crowd," he said. "I remember him boasting about how he and his friends had attacked a boy in the area and how they cut off his ear."

Jermaine told Dobson: "I know that you never killed Stephen Lawrence, but I know for a fact that you do know who killed him."

Dobson - who revealed that he planned to write a book about his experiences - said he was not working, did not claim benefit and was supported by his parents.

Stress of the job takes toll on divorce lawyers

YOUNG FEMALE divorce lawyers are most at risk from stress, says the legal profession's counselling service. Some have threatened suicide and others suffer enormous strain on their relationships.

Figures released by the service today show that cases of stress among lawyers have doubled in the last 15 months. Forty per cent of women who contacted SolCare, the helpline and healthcare advice service funded by the Law Society, worked on divorce or child custody.

Most were under 30 and said that their firms failed to provide day-to-day support. Barry Pritchard, the SolCare national coordinator, said that many had to deal with "enormous pressures" from clients as well.

One 27-year-old woman from a high street practice in the Home Counties said that "hor-

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

"rific" workloads meant her marriage to her non-lawyer husband was "on the rocks".

She told the helpline: "I work to 9pm every night and have to come in at weekends. The work is much more emotionally demanding than I had expected." Another said: "If I go to my partner [in the firm] for help, he tells me he'll deal with it later. But usually it's something urgent that can't wait."

Susannah Haan, chairwoman of the Trainee Solicitors Group, said the group's own helpline had received 214 calls from young solicitors in the last year, two-thirds of whom were women. Two had threatened suicide and some said that their supervising partner had bullied them.

Gillian Bishop, who helped set up self-help groups for stressed lawyers, said it took a particularly hard-hearted lawyer not to be affected by the troubles of distressed clients.

Rosemary Carter, chairman of the Solicitors Family Law Association, blamed the Government for the problem. She said that the last year had seen a high level of government-generated family law reform, which lawyers had to come to terms with. Last month, the Lord Chancellor backed down on plans to scrap legal aid for family law cases. "I have no doubt that contributed to lawyers' worries," she said.

What SolCare cannot explain is why so few male family lawyers contacted its helpline. Ms Carter said: "It is probably a macho thing where men don't like to admit to their emotions."



Ray Fearon, first black Othello at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre since Paul Robeson (right) Gervant Lewis, Hulton Getty



First black Othello at RSC since Robeson

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE ROYAL Shakespeare Company actor Ray Fearon is to become the first black actor to play Othello on the RSC's main stage in Stratford-upon-Avon since the American actor and singer Paul Robeson in 1959.

The play has not been performed at all in Stratford's Royal Shakespeare Theatre since 1985, as the company has not been prepared to have a white actor "black-up".

The black opera singer Willard White played the part at the RSC's studio auditorium in 1989.

Fearon will play opposite Zoe Waites. The pair recently played Romeo and Juliet for the company. The production, opening next week, will be the first play directed on Stratford's main stage by the RSC principal associate director Michael Attenborough.

Titania is 'too sexy' for schools

THE ROYAL Shakespeare Company yesterday issued a warning to primary schools after watching scenes in which Titania simulates having sex with Bottom, who wears a donkey costume during the act.

The 10- and 11-year-olds from the school travelled to see the matinee performance after studying extracts from the play as part of their daily national literacy hour. But by the interval teachers had decided the production "went a bit too far".

The children, from Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic primary school in

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

Coventry, walked out of the production at Stratford-upon-Avon after watching scenes in which Titania simulates having sex with Bottom, who wears a donkey costume during the act.

The 10- and 11-year-olds from the school travelled to see the matinee performance after studying extracts from the play as part of their daily national literacy hour. But by the interval teachers had decided the production "went a bit too far".

The children, from Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic primary school in

Their teacher, Stephen McGaw, said: "What we saw was not what we were expecting. It was sexually explicit and it seemed the director had decided to play the sex card at every opportunity. Everyone knows Shakespeare was a bit cheeky and a bit bawdy, but this went a bit far."

"I know the play and I have seen various productions, and this was nothing like I had ever seen before."

"At the interval I called the children together and asked them why they thought I

had gathered them together.

"One boy said: 'Because it is not suitable for children.' I was relieved they thought that and we left quietly. We didn't make a fuss and we didn't complain."

"The RSC is a wonderful institution and, as an English specialist I admire the wonderful work they do in preserving Shakespeare's works. I just wish they had told us it was a bit near the mark when we booked and we would have simply said 'no thank you'."

The school has now asked the company for a refund.

A spokeswoman for the RSC said the company had now written to primary schools warning them that the production was "too adult" for youngsters.

"It is a vibrant, energetic production, which older children and adults will love," she said.

"We obviously sell tickets for all our productions in advance of the opening nights, and often the only information available in advance is details of the design and casting, not the way the play is being performed."

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THE INDEPENDENT



First black Othello at RSC since Robeson

BY JAMES LISTER
The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of Othello, starring the first black actor to play the role since Laurence Olivier, is a triumph for diversity in the arts. The production, directed by Michael Boyd, is a powerful statement on race and identity in Shakespeare's time and today.

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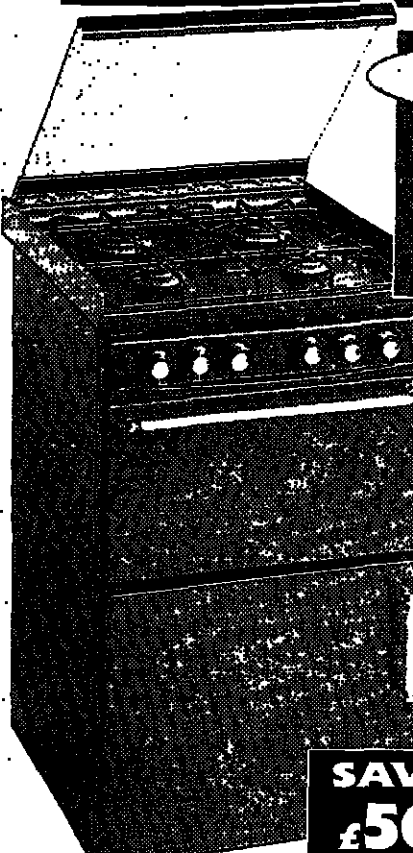
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Region in turmoil: Ex-prime minister given five-year sentence in her absence as Pakistan continues arms race with India

Bhuttos found guilty of corruption



Bhutto: Barred from office

HOURS AFTER Pakistan test-fired a medium-range missile, a court declared the former prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, and her husband guilty of corruption and sentenced them to five years in jail.

The Lahore High Court also barred them from holding any public office during this period and ordered them to pay a fine of \$8.6m (£5.3m).

"Shaheen has hit Bhutto," said one of the former premier's supporters at the Islamabad headquarters of her Pakistan People's Party, referring to the Shaheen missile Pakistan tested yesterday from a mobile launching pad at the Ormara naval base on the Ara-

BY ANWAR IQBAL
in Islamabad

bian Sea coast. It was the second missile Pakistan has fired during the last two days, in response to a similar test by India at the weekend. On Wednesday Pakistan tested Ghauri-II, an improved version of a missile it tested last year.

Bhutto supporters say the government chose the occasion on purpose. "Since people are occupied with these lit-for-lit missile tests by India and Pakistan, they will be slow to respond to the court's verdict and that's what the government wanted," said a supporter from Ms Bhutto's home province of

Sindh. Ms Bhutto was not in Pakistan to hear her sentence. Speaking from London, she said she was a victim of a political witch-hunt. In a message to her supporters from Britain, she vowed to challenge the verdict in Pakistan's Supreme Court and hoped to prove she was innocent.

Pakistan's accountability bureau, headed by Saifur Rehman, who framed the charges against her, accused Ms Bhutto and her husband, Asif Zardari, of "stealing \$100m from public funds during her two terms as prime minister", a charge Ms Bhutto denies. Mr Rehman said the Bhuttos had destroyed proof of their in-

volvement in corrupt practices. "We sent our investigators to the United States, Britain and Switzerland to collect evidence. They worked relentlessly and collected enough evidence to convict them," said Mr Rehman.

Ms Bhutto said Mr Rehman's investigators simply forged the documents to implicate her. She had earlier requested the court not to accept these documents.

Mr Rehman said: "We accepted the challenge and on our request a judicial team visited Switzerland and verified the documents as genuine. It was this judicial probe that convinced the court."

Justice Abdul Qayyum of the Lahore High Court said Ms Bhutto and her husband had been found guilty of corruption and had abused public office while in power.

The verdict automatically removed Ms Bhutto and her husband from parliament. She is a member of the lower house of parliament while Mr Zardari is a member of the upper house, known as the Senate. He is allowed to attend the Senate proceedings although he has been in prison since Ms Bhutto was ousted as prime minister on 5 November 1996.

General elections, held three months later, brought Nawaz Sharif to power. He pledged to

"purge the nation of all corrupt politicians". He set up the accountability bureau under Mr Rehman and gave him the task to expose corrupt politicians, officials and industrialists.

But the accountability process has been seen as partisan and is accused of taking no action against government supporters.

"This is not true. We have taken action against those in the ruling party as well. Bhutto's is a high-profile case. It gets all the publicity while our other activities go unreported," said Mr Rehman.

Ms Bhutto disagreed. In a message from London to her party headquarters in Islam-

abad she said: "The sole purpose of the accountability process is to discredit me and my family."

She added: "Dealing with these allegations has traumatised me. It has been painful beyond belief."

The former prime minister said the government was doing its best to vilify her but "I am happy to say that the people of Pakistan have rejected these allegations."

Ms Bhutto said she had had no hope of proving her innocence "before a judge (Qayyum) whose father hanged my father and who is a close family associate of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif".

Delhi vote threatens to topple coalition

THE FATE of India's 13-month Hindu nationalist government was hanging by a thread last night after the first round of a two-day parliamentary debate on its future.

The Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, yesterday tabled a confidence motion in his Bharatiya Janata Party-led government on the insistence of President K. R. Narayanan after the withdrawal of a key ally from the 18-member coalition.

A vote will be taken tomorrow, but the future of the government deprived of the crucial support of former film star Jayalalitha Jayaram and the 18 MPs of her All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party looks bleak.

However if the government is toppled - making it the fifth to go in four years - it is far from clear which party will emerge to form a new, probably equally unstable, coalition.

Sonia Gandhi's Congress party is the second largest in parliament. But it may choose to support an alliance of non-BJP parties without formally joining them in government, rather than attempting to lead its own coalition.

The contentious debate took place yesterday against the threatening back-drop of neigh-

BY IAN MACKINNON
in Delhi

bouring Pakistan's second missile test in two days. Both missile launches, of the Shaheen I and the earlier Ghauri II, showed that Islamabad is capable of striking deep into India. Pakistan had responded to Sunday's firing by India of its Agni II intermediate range ballistic missile in much the same way it trumped Delhi's decision to test five nuclear devices last May with six explosions of its own.

During yesterday's debate, the leader of the Congress party in Parliament, Sharad Pawar, criticised the BJP for launching the Agni II, saying it was a direct contradiction to the prime minister's much-publicised efforts to reduce tensions with Pakistan.

However, analysts believe that if Congress or another coalition grouping comes to office after tomorrow's vote, none would have the power to conduct meaningful discussions with Pakistan, leaving the fractious neighbours in an uncomfortable limbo. Prem Shankar Jha, a leading political commentator, said: "If the BJP loses, everything will go on hold: talks with the US, talks with Pakistan. And going on hold means going backwards." But in the fractured



Pakistanis near Karachi celebrating the testing of the Shaheen I missile yesterday as the government in neighbouring India was preparing for a vote of confidence AP

landscape of Indian politics the big picture of national security takes a backseat, even though Ms Jayalalitha's excuse for withdrawing her support for the government was the controversial sacking of the Navy chief. Few doubt that the real motivation behind the move was that the BJP administration rebuffed her demand that it sack the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) state gov-

ernment of Tamil Nadu, where she and her associates face 48 corruption charges.

Consequently the DMK and its leader M Karunanidhi are among the many smaller parties, many not natural allies of the BJP, that government ministers have been frantically wooing for the past week.

With 39 parties in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament where yesterday's de-

bate took place, the permutations are mind-boggling and almost impossible to predict before tomorrow's vote. The Congress with a handful of loyal allies controls 145 lawmakers in the fragmented 545-member lower house, far short of the 272 seats required to form a government. Several regional parties and Communists bitterly opposed to the BJP have said they would support an alterna-

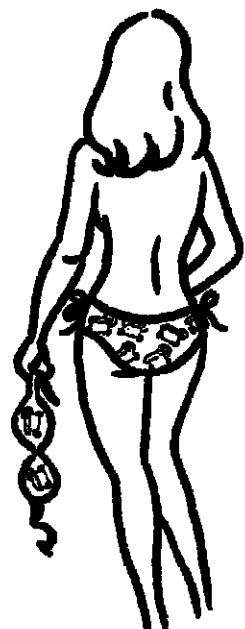
tive government, with or without Congress participation.

But analysts say Congress would ideally have liked to have waited until next year before striking. Several state elections are planned then, in which it is expected to do well. "I am not sure if the Congress wants to play on this wicket. It is a fragmented house where anyone can hold you to ransom," said Ashish Nandy, a political analyst.

Despite assertions by the prime minister that his party will cross the threshold for a simple majority, he would appear to be at least 14 seats short. Yet it is impossible to rule out tactical ab-

stentions by the smaller parties to keep the BJP in power, rather than foist another general election on voters already jaded by the shenanigans of the politicians.

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Russia ignores war to hang dreams on a star called Alla

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

THERE SHOULD have been no argument about the item leading yesterday's midday news on NTV, one of Russia's main channels - the Balkans war, right? Wrong.

Ethnic cleansing and Nato's bombing blunders were ignored as Russia paid homage to a hero - not a general or a politician, but a gap-toothed, nicotine-voiced, and thoroughly weathered female singer.

It was Alla Pugacheva's 50th birthday yesterday, and Russia - groping to find stars on which to hang its dreams - gave her full honours. Hundreds of fans greeted her with roses outside her Moscow flat as she climbed into her white stretched limousine and swept away to be



Alla Pugacheva: Homage to an unlikely hero

congratulated by Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin.

The popular *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper devoted its front page to her picture and decorated its inside pages with extracts from her

songs, raving on with: "She is part of our life, a symbol of an entire era." The more sober *Kommersant* called her "the social-cultural phenomenon of the second half of the 20th century".

But the days when flame-haired Ms Pugacheva could convincingly strut in micro-skirts and shiny patent leather boots before goggle-eyed Soviet audiences are long past.

Leaders come and go - Brezhnev, Chernenko, Andropov, Gorbachev - but she has survived. Mr Yeltsin awarding her a medal for "service to the fatherland", and said: "I am happy to live in Pugacheva's epoch." The star replied: "You are like a father to me."

When she came only 15th in the Eurovision Song Contest in Dublin two years ago, many

thought she would step into the shadows, leaving the limelight to her crooner husband, Filipp Kirkorov, almost 20 years younger, and her daughter, also a singer. But what do Russians care what the West thinks?

She is a peculiarly Russian figure - the Slavic Cilla Black with a dash of Liz Taylor, constantly battling the loathed tax authorities, with her implausible argument that Russia's pop stars are poor - though they ride around in vast limos. The taxmen estimate she still earns up to \$33,000 (£24,000) an hour in concerts, plus income from her 150 million records.

Russia, caught in a terrible depression, needs its heroes. Ms Pugacheva takes her mission seriously, and is fond of telling fans: "We're Russians, we'll adapt, we'll survive." She has,

Israel jails politician over bribery

A JERUSALEM court yesterday sentenced Aryeh Deri, one of the most powerful politicians in Israel, to four years in prison for taking bribes.

The verdict is a serious blow to his party, Shas, which has strong support among Israelis of Middle Eastern origin.

After first citing the prophets Amos and Jeremiah on corruption, Judge Yaakov Tzemach said: "Bribe-taking became a way of life for him. He presented an extreme danger to the nation and people. Too much mercy would be cruel to

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Jerusalem

society," Mr Deri said he would appeal.

He was found guilty last month of taking bribes worth \$155,000 (£97,000) over a five-year period when he was director-general and later minister of the interior.

Distraught Shas supporters, dressed in the distinctive black hats and three-quarter length coats of the ultra-orthodox, pressed against the gates of the court yesterday as the verdict

was read out. Some chanted: "Aryeh is innocent." Others said he was "framed because he was a Sephardi" - a Jew originating from the Middle East.

Not all of Mr Deri's supporters are religious. One woman wearing secular clothes standing outside the court said she backed him because of his advocacy for social reform: "He created a social revolution for people in the slums. What has happened is terrible."

It is unclear how long Deri can remain a power broker after yesterday's sentence,

which included a £40,000 fine. He remains leader of Shas, the party he virtually created, and which has 10 seats in the 120-member Knesset (parliament). He will not go to jail until the Supreme Court has heard his appeal, well after the Israeli election on 17 May.

Shas is painting Deri's trial as persecution of the Sephardi community. He is unlikely to step down while he retains the support of the revered spiritual leader of Shas, Avadia Yosef, who was having an emergency operation yesterday.

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Hobby police get serious

EUROPEAN TIMES
BERLIN

THE VOLUNTEER Police Reserves of Berlin, set up in the West on the day the Wall was built, have been under-employed of late. Restricted to the unchallenging task of keeping an eye on dogs that offend against the laws of hygiene, these vigilantes of the Free World have been complaining of boredom. More than a few have taken to gun-running, burglary and marching in Nazi uniforms.

But help is at hand. Ten years after the fall of the Wall, this ageing band of Cold War warriors are to ride again. The city government has drafted a new law which, once through, will give them new powers. Their outfit would be known as the "Volunteer Police Service" and they would be allowed for the first time to drive police patrol cars.

Then, no longer will they confine their loiterings to the city's parks. Berlin's "Hobby Polizisten", as they are contemptuously known to their professional colleagues, could in future be sent after thieves, burglars and thugs. They will be encouraged to bring unruly motorists to order, dishing out fines in situations where their jaded, full-time colleagues might be inclined to turn a blind eye. And despite the expanded duties, they will have enhanced responsibility for Berlin's notorious plague of dog excrement. No pooch will be able to hide from their watchful gaze.

The reorganisation is intended to lighten the burden of the professional police force. Since the borders to the east became porous, Berlin has emerged as Germany's crime capital, host to a swarm of mafias originating from the former Soviet Union. But there aren't enough policemen, and the near-

bankrupt local government lacks funds to hire more. According to the police union, Berlin is short of 1,000 professionals on the beat. The shortage was fatally exposed in February when the Israeli general consulate was given inadequate protection from Kurdish demonstrators. Israeli guards stepped into the void, fired into the crowd and killed four protesters.

The police should be delighted with the help they are getting. But they are not. "Members of the Police Reserve will be given only a two-week crash course," complained Eberhard Schönborg, head of the police trade union of Berlin. "Then they will be squeezed into a uniform, a weapon placed into their hands, to be let loose among the population."

Whether the course is too long or too short is a moot point since, in the past, members of the criminal fraternity sought out the volunteers' training establishments to sharpen their own skills. An investigation a few years ago revealed that the ranks of the volunteers harboured more than 100 convicted criminals.

Also worrying many Berliners is the prospect of these new sheriff's deputies with guns in their hands. After a series of gun-related incidents, a parliamentary inquiry was conducted into the illegal weapons trade in the city in 1993. Twelve neo-Nazi gun-dealers were identified. Five of them were police volunteers.

Berliners, especially left-wingers, do not fancy their chances. The Bill is due to go before the city parliament at the end of this month. If it passes, the police union has already indicated that it will fight it all the way to Germany's Constitutional Court. IMRE KARACS



A woman preparing to vote in the presidential election in Algiers yesterday AP

Algerians vote in one-horse election race

ALGERIANS VOTED to choose the country's first civilian president since 1965 yesterday - knowing even before they cast their votes who the winner would be. The race was reduced to little more than farce after six of the seven candidates pulled out, fearing that the balloting was rigged.

The single remaining candidate, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, viewed as the choice of the powerful military, said that he would accept victory only if backed by a large majority of the electorate and a massive turnout. Early polling was moderate but this did not deter Mr Bouteflika's campaign managers from insisting that the turnout would be sufficient to confer legitimacy on any victory.

The anti-army figures in the ballot pulled out in protest at alleged fraud in early polling for security forces and at mobile stations in Algeria's vast Saharan expanse. However, it also appeared to be a revolt against the army-backed order that has bred fraud and corruption since Algeria gained independence from France in 1962.

The withdrawal was a blow to hopes that the voting would heal divisions in a nation caught up in a cycle of violence since

BY EILEEN BYRNE
in Algiers

1992, when the Islamic insurgency began. Some 75,000 people have been killed since then.

The sole candidate, meanwhile, ruled out any form of power-sharing if elected. Asked if he might consider forming a government of reconciliation with opposition figures, as has been mooted, he said there was no question of a dialogue with the Islamic Salvation Front as such, but he left the door open to informal contacts. "I shall not negotiate with a dissolved party. On the other hand, I shall negotiate with individuals."

Polling stations kept all seven names in the ballot, so people could still choose someone other than Mr Bouteflika - perhaps even forcing a second round.

The six who withdrew appealed yesterday to their supporters to "follow through with their shared effort calmly and peacefully". The Socialist Forces Front said that demonstrations against the alleged fraud were planned for central Algiers today.

The candidates, who spanned the political spectrum, pulled out after President

Liamine Zeroual refused to discuss the claims of fraud, suggesting that they file formal complaints. In a nationwide address, Mr Zeroual - a retired general stepping down 18 months before his five-year term ends - sharply criticised the move and ordered the election to continue.

Mr Bouteflika has been hailed in the press as the "candidate of consensus", a derogatory reference to his backing from a wide swath of the establishment - including the National Liberation Front which ruled Algeria for three decades, the powerful UGTA union, and a moderate Islamic party in the coalition government.

Despite the setback, the presidential campaign has not been marred by the bloodshed of the 1995 general election. Security at polling booths was all but invisible - a sign of the dwindling violence in the region. In previous votes, heavily armed soldiers kept watch.

However, 10 people were reported killed on Monday by anti-government guerrillas in the western province of Mascara, and Algerian newspapers reported several clashes between government troops and Muslim rebels.

China clamps down on anniversary protests

DISSIDENTS WERE under tight surveillance yesterday as police cordoned off the grave of Hu Yaobang, the reformist leader whose death exactly 10 years ago sparked China's 1989 pro-democracy movement. At least two dissidents have been prevented from travelling to Mr Hu's grave in the south-east province of Jiangxi.

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

China's leadership fears that a string of imminent anniversaries could be a focus for protests over grievances, including rising urban unemployment and corruption. "We have been ordered by our superiors not to organise or en-

courage students to mourn Hu Yaobang," said an administrator at Gongqing College in Gongqingcheng city, where Mr Hu's grave lies.

Yesterday morning in Jiangxi, a journalist for the Associated Press saw several motorcades with police escorts entering the Yaobang cemetery, which was closed to the public. The reporter

was then detained by police for four hours and afterwards ordered not to leave his hotel.

In Peking, a member of the China Democracy Party, Gao Hongming, said he and two colleagues from the outlawed group had paid their respects to Mr Hu - who was the Communist Party head for six years in the Eighties - near Tiananmen

Square on Wednesday, even though they were tailed by police. Yesterday, he was under tighter surveillance.

"The China Democracy Party, like the people of China, will cherish forever those who speak the truth and do good deeds for the people," the dissidents said in a statement to mark the anniversary.

Mr Hu was the most reformist of China's leaders but was ousted in January 1987, for being too soft on "bourgeois liberalism". Just two days after his death was announced on 15 April 1989, the first procession to Tiananmen Square took place, starting a movement which ended on 4 June when tanks and soldiers swept through Peking.

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PARTICIPATING HOTELS

Epernay, Le Thibault IV ★★

Situated 20km south of Epernay on the Champagne Route in the heart of the Champagne region, Le Thibault offers a good standard of accommodation, with reasonably sized rooms and en suite bathrooms. The hotel's restaurant is well known across the Champagne area, serving both gastronomic menus and champagne dinners. The hotel can arrange a free visit to local wine-cellars and, although this does not include wine-tasting, we're sure that it will be an insight into the Champagne world!



Epernay, Hostellerie de la Reine Blanche ★★★

The village of Vertus lies 20km south of Epernay on the Champagne Route in the heart of the Champagne region. The charm and warmth offered by the Hostellerie de la Reine Blanche is quite typical of the hotels in this region. The hotel has a swimming-pool, sauna and fitness room and the bedrooms are large and sumptuously decorated, with en suite bathrooms. The Hostellerie also boasts wine-cellars holding vineyards dating back to 1929 to accompany its restaurant's fine gastronomic cuisine.



Troyes, Forêt d'Orient ★★★

Beautiful natural setting, in the heart of the Champagne region, between two lakes for water sports and on an 18-hole golf course, 15km from medieval Troyes and 100km from the Epernay champagne cellars. Relax around the heated pool, enjoy a round of golf or archery (both playable locally), or exercise in the free fitness room. The generous-sized rooms offer satellite TV, telephone and lovely terrace rooms with separate w.c. The restaurant has a poolside terrace offering good-value menus. Family rooms available.



Reims, L'Assiette Champenoise ★★★★★

Located just 2km from the centre of Reims, with its magnificent Gothic cathedral and famous champagne cellars. Set in large grounds, this exquisite hotel offers excellent facilities and a high level of comfort in relaxing surroundings. In addition to the heated indoor swimming-pool, guests have free use of the sauna. A gastronomic experience at the popular restaurant is certainly not to be missed. All bedrooms have satellite TV and mini-bar. Buffet breakfast and private outdoor parking.



Destination and hotel name	10/04-30/04		01/05-27/05		28/05-31/08		01/09-31/10	
	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt
Epernay Le Thibault IV	49	27	59	28	69	29	59	28
Troyes Forêt d'Orient	69	28	79	29	89	31	79	29
Epernay La Reine Blanche	79	37	89	38	99	40	89	38
Reims Assiette Champenoise	89	38	99	42	109	44	99	42

Destination and hotel name	10/04-30/04		01/05-27/05		28/05-31/08		01/09-31/10	
	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt
Epernay Le Thibault IV	49	27	59	28	69	29	59	28
Troyes Forêt d'Orient	79	28	89	29	99	31	89	29
Epernay La Reine Blanche	89	37	99	38	109	40	99	38
Reims Assiette Champenoise	99	38	109	42	119	44	109	42

All prices shown are per person and in pounds sterling

Name

Address

Postcode

Booking Ref. No.

SEND TO: The Independent Champagne Offer, SeaFrance European Life, 10 Kerry Street, Leeds, LS18 4AW

Terms and Conditions:

1. This offer is valid for bookings made direct with SeaFrance European Life between 10 April 1999 and 30 April 1999. 2. Supplement £10 per person for travel 30 April 1999 to 4 May 1999 and for travel at weekends (Friday - Sunday) between 28 May 1999 and 26 September 1999. 3. Alternative hotels may be offered at time of booking, subject to availability. 4. This offer may not be used in conjunction with any other promotion. 5. No photocoped tokens & Promoter: SeaFrance European Life.

Token

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THE INDEPENDENT

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Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098

BUSINESS

No recession this year, says BCC

BRIEFING

Electra thwarts £1.3bn 3i bid
THE £1.3BN 3i bid for rival venture capital group, Electra, looked set to collapse last night after Electra investors voted to back the board's proposal to thwart the bid. The board needed to win support from at least 75 per cent of shareholders who voted on the proposal at yesterday's extraordinary meeting and after several recounts, Electra won support from more than 76 per cent.

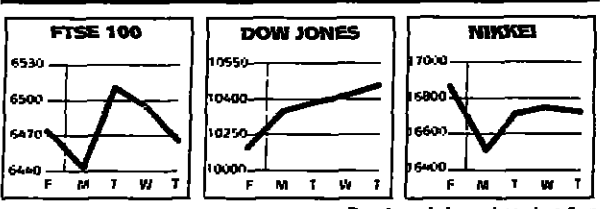
3i has stated that it will withdraw its cash-and-shares offer for the trust if the Electra deal is approved. 3i had earlier in the day complained to the Takeover Panel after Swiss Re, the insurance group, announced while the meeting was still going on it had bought 1.5 per cent of the trust and was seeking to develop a commercial relationship with Electra.

Asda nets £1.5m fresh cod deal
ASDA yesterday launched an unusual deal with four Grimsby trawlers to supply over 100 Asda stores with fresh cod. The deal guarantees £1.5m a year to the owners of the four boats in the Asda fleet, irrespective of market prices. Due to maritime superstition about the colour green, the "Asda ensign" the fleet will fly under has been changed to blue and white instead of the company's green and white corporate colours.

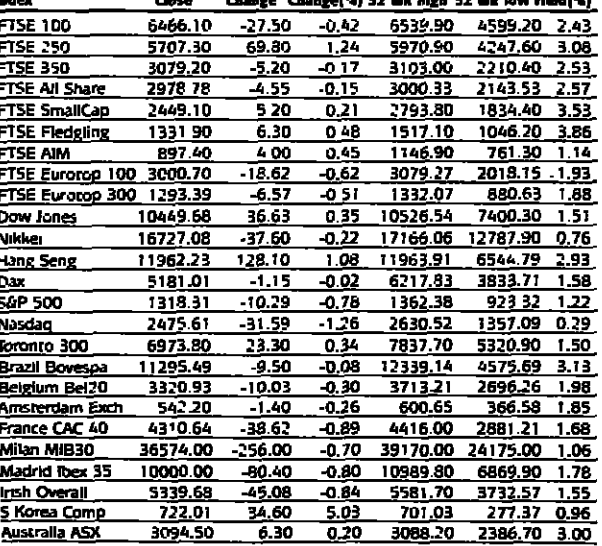
Chris Hodgson, category manager for fish at Asda, is pictured with the crew of Jubilee Quest, one of the four trawlers.

Cadbury buys Hawaiian Punch
CADBURY SCHWEPPE'S is buying Hawaiian Punch, America's leading fruit punch brand, from Procter & Gamble for \$203m (£126m). The drink is sold mainly in the United States, where it will join Cadbury's Doctor Pepper carbonated brand. Hawaiian Punch recorded sales of \$133m last year.

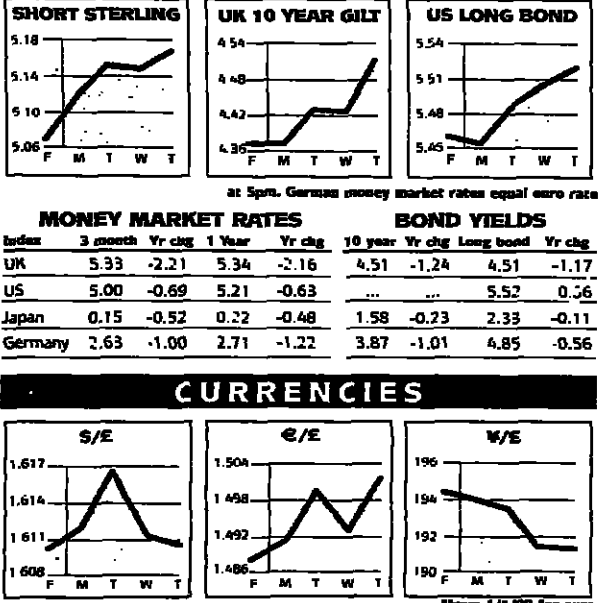
STOCK MARKETS



INTEREST RATES



CURRENCIES



OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	14.75	0.28	12.53	GDP (15.40)	3.00	112.04	Mar
Gold (\$)	282.85	1.00	307.25	RPI (163.70)	2.10	160.33	Mar
Silver (\$)	4.88	-0.06	6.24	Base Rates	5.25	7.25	Oct at 5pm

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4548	Mexico (nuevo peso)	13.96
Austria (schillings)	19.94	Netherlands (guilder)	3.1954
Belgium (francs)	58.61	New Zealand (\$)	2.8624
Canada (\$)	2.3525	Norway (kroner)	12.17
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8373	Portugal (escudos)	289.50
Denmark (kroner)	10.85	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8770
Finland (markka)	8.5523	Singapore (\$)	2.5739
France (francs)	9.5083	South Africa (rand)	9.4218
Germany (marks)	2.8464	Spain (pesetas)	240.71
Greece (drachma)	471.13	Sweden (kronor)	13.06
Hong Kong (\$)	12.12	Switzerland (francs)	2.3354
Ireland (pounds)	1.1412	Thailand (bahts)	54.43
India (rupees)	62.10	Turkey (liras)	590080
Israel (shekels)	6.0011	USA (\$)	1.5759
Italy (lira)	2823		
Japan (yen)	187.65		
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.8200		
Malta (lira)	0.6188		

THE UK ECONOMY is set to avoid recession this year, according to a new survey, with signs of recovery beginning to appear even in the struggling manufacturing sector.

Evidence from the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) quarterly survey - the most comprehensive study of its kind - suggests the economy has turned the corner, analysts said. Growth in the first quarter is still expected to be weak, but the economy is well positioned to bounce back later in the year.

BY LEA PATERSON

Neil Parker of Royal Bank of Scotland said: "This shows we are over the worst of the turmoil. It's time to get optimistic about the UK economy."

Activity was subdued throughout much of Britain during the first three months of the year, the BCC said. Manufacturing sales to the domestic market, for example, were at their lowest level since the end of the last recession.

economic activity - such as manufacturers' order levels - were significantly improved. This suggests growth will pick up markedly as the year goes on.

The survey results for the services sector were particularly healthy. The sector as a whole reported positive UK sales growth for the first time in a year, while service exports expanded for the first time in six months. As with the manufacturing sector, the BCC survey found evidence of sharply improved business confidence.

In the City, gilts fell as traders scaled back their expectations of further interest-rate cuts. The pound strengthened against the euro to close at 66.53p.

Despite the upbeat tone of the survey, Dr Ian Peters, BCC deputy director-general, called the recovery "fragile" and urged the Bank of England to cut interest rates by a further quarter-point next month. He said: "The important thing is not to get carried away. The onus on the Bank must now be to nurture this fledgling upturn."

But even Dr Peters - a long-time advocate of lower interest rates - acknowledged that the bottom of the UK interest-rate cycle was now approaching.

He said: "A quarter-point cut is necessary, but after that we will be getting to the point where the scope for further cuts will be limited."

Fewer of the survey respondents expressed concerns about the level of sterling which, contrary to expectations, has strengthened against the euro since the beginning of the year.

Dr Peters commented: "Our view is that business is now starting to cope with the strong pound."

Adjustments to sterling's continued strength could be one factor behind the falling levels of employment seen in the survey, economists said.

Job creation in the services sector slowed down to levels not seen for almost six years, according to the BCC.

The survey showed that there continued to be net job losses in manufacturing.

C&W's protests fail in Japan

A RUMBLING dispute about foreign access to Japan's telecoms market escalated yesterday after the board of IDC, the long-distance telecoms operator, recommended a controversial takeover bid from Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, the state-owned telecoms giant.

The bid, thought to value IDC at 63bn yen (£330m), was approved at a marathon board meeting yesterday despite opposition from Cable & Wireless, the UK group that owns 17.7 per cent of IDC, and protests by British politicians.

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

It emerged yesterday that Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, wrote to Japan's post and telecommunications ministry in March raising questions about NTT's bid. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is also understood to have intervened in the battle on C&W's behalf.

"We have pointed out that a successful bid from NTT would raise regulatory and competition issues," a spokeswoman for the Department of Trade and Industry said yesterday. The Japanese government has a controlling shareholding in NTT but is also responsible for regulating Japanese telecoms.

C&W believes IDC's recommendation of NTT's bid flouts an agreement dating from 1986, when IDC was set up, allowing IDC shareholders to match any bid made for the company. C&W holds 17.7 per cent of IDC, whose other large shareholders include Toyota, the car giant, and the Itochu trading group. C&W is understood to have tabled an offer for the shares in IDC it does not own that values the company at 63.4bn yen.

According to sources in Japan the IDC board meeting, which lasted for four hours, approached the decision about the two bids "as a foregone conclusion".

When the decision came to a vote, all the Japanese board directors - who include representatives of Toyota and Itochu - voted for the NTT bid.

Rod Olsen, a former C&W director and directors nominated by AirTouch, the US mobile phone group that owns 10 per cent of IDC, abstained, saying they had not been given enough information. Three other directors nominated by C&W abstained because of their involvement with C&W's offer.

A spokesman for C&W said the company was "disappointed" by the vote. However, he added: "We shall continue to protect our interest and ensure that our rights as a founder shareholder under the basic agreement should be honoured."

C&W is understood to be especially concerned about a new provision, due to be added to Japan's commercial code in the summer, which would allow majority shareholders to force minority shareholders to sell their shares. If IDC's other shareholders sell their shares to NTT the company could use the provision to force C&W - and potentially AirTouch - to sell out. However, any such move would require the approval of the Japanese government as NTT's majority shareholder.



Sir Michael Bishop is predicting casualties among UK no-frills airlines

Budget airlines face shake-out, says Bishop

BY PHILIP THORNTON

THE HEAD of the UK's second-largest scheduled airline yesterday predicted a bloodbath between the low-cost carriers.

British Midland chairman Sir Michael Bishop said there would be "blood on the carpet" as budget airlines try to reposition themselves.

His comments came as British Midland revealed that profits for 1998 had tumbled by 34 per cent despite a record passenger total. Sir Michael said: "There will be some real blood on the carpet from the low-cost carriers at Stansted airport because people are coming into the market with a hybrid product that is neither one thing nor the other."

Transport Correspondent

There were signs that budget airlines were moving away from the core concept, he said, highlighting Debonair's agreement to operate five aircraft on behalf of Lufthansa Cityline.

Sir Michael said British Midland had ruled out setting up a low-cost operation at Stansted, the London airport favoured by no-frills carriers.

He said budget airlines were not taking market share from British Midland, its best routes in 1998 were Heathrow-Amsterdam, where it competes with easyJet, and Heathrow-Dublin, against Ryanair.

Pre-tax profits slipped from a record £16.7m in 1997 to £11.02m. Sir Michael said the fall was due to a £5m "windfall" from the British Airways strike in 1997 and a £4m start-up cost for a new London-Manchester service.

The Manchester service broke a 40-year BA monopoly. Sir Michael said the route moved into operating profit last month and his airline had taken a 30 per cent market share.

Turnover rose 3 per cent to £558.8m and passenger numbers were up 5 per cent to six million.

British Midland has won licences to serve New York, Washington DC, Boston and Miami in the US, subject to a new bilateral air services agreement.

Barclays refuses to pay headhunter's search fee

BARCLAYS BANK, the highest bidder for the headhunter's search fee, was refused earlier this week when its new chief executive, Mike O'Neill, quit because of heart problems, is refusing to pay all of the £500,000 search fee that was agreed with headhunters Spencer Stuart until a replacement for Mr O'Neill is found.

Barclays insists it is normal practice to make a small down payment when a headhunter is engaged but for full settlement of the fee to be delayed until the candidate has completed a trial period, usually of several months. "We are not paying for a second search," Barclays said yesterday, "although obviously there will be further expenses such as plane tickets."

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

Mr O'Neill was given a clean bill of health in February when he was checked out on Spencer Stuart's behalf by one of their Harley Street doctors before the final offer was made.

However, after a bout of flu last month Mr O'Neill consulted his own doctor in California and was diagnosed as suffering from heart arrhythmia, a serious but not life-threatening condition, and was strongly advised against taking up the post. The diagnosis was confirmed at a second medical by Spencer Stuart's doctor in London on Monday.

The fee for executive searches is generally pitched at 30 per cent of total annual package, including allowances and options. Mr O'Neill's package including allowances was worth up to £15m over three years.

Barclays is adamant that the checks were correctly carried out and that there is no reason to drop Spencer Stuart and appoint another headhunting firm.

Barclays' board met yesterday for the second time this week and agreed to press ahead with the search. It believes that having done the initial winnowing it is at a relatively advanced stage. There is one candidate who was a strong contender before Mr O'Neill was appointed who the bank is trying to contact.

Insiders were adamant, however, that Barclays did not want to look as if any decision would be rushed.

There were suggestions yesterday that Barclays may appoint an internal candidate. John Varley, head of retail, and Chris Lendrum, head of corporate banking, are highly regarded. But City institutions believe the bank should try to find another international banker.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

MID-CAP shares again made the running as blue chips marked time. In another busy session Footsie ended above its worst level, off 27.5 points at 6,466.1.

Much of the action was among the 250 mid-cap shares and their index rose 0.8 to 5,707.3. The small caps made more modest headway.

Asda was the day's best performing blue chip, jumping 17.25p to 176.5p on takeover rumours. Rio Tinto was up 92.5p to 1,004p, and Bilton 18p to 187.5p.

Derek Pain, page 21

NEW YORK

THE DOW JONES was trading modestly higher by mid-afternoon, with investors shifting out of the major blue-chips and into smaller cyclical stocks. Gains in the manufacturer Caterpillar and the chemicals group DuPont helped the Dow up 35 points to 10,447 in a heavy trading session.

"Money is shifting out of some of the largest 50 stocks and moving into those with more visible earnings growth. The shift is breathtaking in its swiftness and power," said one analyst.

TOKYO

STOCKS CLOSED modestly lower amid worries about the strength of the yen. The Nikkei 225 finished down 37.6 points - 0.22 per cent - at 16,727.08. June Nikkei futures ended 10 points lower.

Tetsuya Ishijima, chief strategist at Okasan Securities, said: "Since export-driven hi-tech manufacturers have surged significantly, investors and dealers were waiting to take profits. The fall in the Nasdaq and rise in the yen gave them an excuse." Fujitsu and Toshiba were among fallers.

SAO PAULO

PROFIT-taking sent Brazilian stocks lower in morning trade. Just before lunch, the benchmark Bovespa index was 133 points, or 1.22 per cent, lower at 11,167. The commercial real was unchanged from late Wednesday at 1,670-1,680 per dollar.

According to traders, the Central Bank's decision on Wednesday to cut interest rates by 5.5 per cent to 34 per cent was largely expected and therefore had little impact on stocks.

FRANKFURT

SHARES EDGED up in improving investor sentiment. The electronic Xetra DAX ended up 2.96 points - 0.06 per cent - at 5,189.72. The floor DAX closed flat at 5,181.01.

Telecoms shares tumbled on news of falling first-quarter sales at Deutsche Telekom. "The telecoms sector is disappointing with its numbers," an analyst said. However, growing confidence over the economic outlook after last week's surprise European interest-rate cut helped most cyclical stocks to close higher.

City	State	Lat	Long	Alt
Albuquerque	NM	35° 10'	106° 40'	5,460

Facing an old

Tunnel captures more

World Bank lends to R

Feed goes back to chi

Correction

BANK OF INTEREST

BANK

RISES				FALLS			
PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG		PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG	
APF Paratour	49.25	7.00	16.60	Scottia Hogs	126.00	-13.00	-9.35
Lasson Pk	136.75	19.25	16.00	Brl Blotch	18.00	-1.50	-7.89
Alcoa Group Pk176.50	72.25	10.30	10.30	Costana Group	23.50	-5.00	-20.86
Boltline Pk	167.50	18.00	10.60	Dixons Group 1307.00	-94.80	-4.71	
Rail Time Pl	1094.00	92.50	10.10	Elcom Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-5.96
Plat Pk	259.80	27.80	9.53	Perkins & Ori	887.80	-50.00	-5.39
Jarvis Pk	475.80	35.00	8.00	DGS Group Pk615.50	-34.50	-5.62	
Claydon Int	271.00	18.00	8.96	Unicover Pk 638.50	-35.00	-4.99	
Bank Group Pk174.25	21.75	8.72	10.00	Amstar Pk 57.00	-34.00	-4.98	
Lanark Pk	509.25	39.25	7.42	Compass Group69.50	-35.00	-4.93	

TOP 20 VOLUMES AT 5pm									
Stock	Bid	Ask	Stock	Bid	Ask	Stock	Bid	Ask	Vol.
Apple Group Pk	336.00	336.00	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Shell Transp-avg 95.00	95.00	95.00	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800
Imperial Oil 21.30	21.30	21.30	BP Amoco Pk	21.00	21.00	Shell Group Pk	11.00	11.00	11,800

HOUR BY HOUR									
Open	High	Low	Close	Open	High	Low	Close	Open	High
0900	6451.5			1100	6515.5			1500	6488.5
0930	6451.5			1200	6515.5			1600	6488.5
1000	6488.5			1300	6488.5			1700	6488.5
				1400	6488.5			1800	6488.5

OTHER FINANCIAL									
Stock	Bid	Ask	Stock	Bid	Ask	Stock	Bid	Ask	Vol.
1000	6451.5		1100	6515.5		1500	6488.5		
0930	6451.5		1200	6515.5		1600	6488.5		
1000	6488.5		1300	6488.5		1700	6488.5		
			1400	6488.5		1800	6488.5		

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SHARE PRICE RISE

Prices are in sterling except where stated. Price reflects the official closing mid price. Figures are based on the FTSE-350. The yield is the latest 12-month yield.

share price. The price-earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided as a percentage by earnings per share excluding extraordinary items but including exceptional items. Excess cash is cash and cash equivalents less debt. Fully paid means the share has been paid for in full. Suspended means the share is not being traded. Other details are given in the notes to the accounts.

THE INDEPENDENT

to access Real-Time Share Prices 24 hours a day, call 09001 - 201 200
you will hear the current FTSE 100 share price.

You can interrupt at any time to hear a Real-Time Share Price by keying * plus a 4-digit landline.

For help with the service including the Portfolio facility please call the Help Desk on 0870-775 010 (outside the UK).

13 plc, London EC2A 4PJ) 03001 calls cost 60p per minute



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Takeover talk sets Asda's tills ringing

A NEAR hysterical rush into Asda sent the shares of the nation's third-largest supermarket chain soaring 17.25p to 176.5p. By Asda standards it was an incredible jump: on a good day the shares move 5p.

Wal-Mart, the big US retailer thought to be stalking a British retailer, was largely responsible for the excitement. Kingfisher was also in the frame. But independent research suggesting the group is winning market share and a series of meetings with analysts also contributed to the upsurge.

According to Seag, turnover nudged 39 million shares with three-quarters of the business conducted through the old-fashioned market-making system.

The pattern of the Asda share turnover suggested it was speculative interest that dominated the buying. Wal-Mart, which has already moved into Germany, has made no secret of its desire to expand elsewhere in Europe. The stock market is convinced it will not be long before

SPORTS INTERNET has confirmed what the market suspected - its first takeover is near.

The group said yesterday it is in talks to buy a leading Internet sports and gaming group. The shares arrived last month at 55p; they rose 25p to 162.5p - a peak. Behind the company is former City analyst Chris Akers. He created the business to take advantage of takeover opportunities among the fledgling Internet companies.

it descends on a British operation. Asda, because of the shape and size of its retail spread, is seen in many quarters as an ideal acquisition for the Americans. Rumours have swirled about a deal but Asda has in the past denied any talks were going on. Kingfisher could also contemplate an Asda strike.

Archie Norman, the Asda chief, is a former Kingfisher finance director and it is known the two retailers have held exploratory talks. Kingfisher appears to have reacquired its taste for food and is testing the hyper-market concept. Asda is not the only group seen as a potential Wal-Mart target. In recent months Safeway, MFI and Booker, the cash-and-carry chain, have been the subjects of intense speculation.

The independent AGB survey showed Asda was outperforming its supermarket rivals. The analyst meetings, which appeared to underline the AGB encouragement, are being held before the chain goes into its close season ahead of results.

Asda shares were at one time up 18.25p; they peaked at 214p last summer and, with talk of price wars and Government probes undermining supermarket sentiment, fell to 140p last month.

The rest of the market replicated Wednesday's display.

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Blue chips suffered a modest reverse but the mid-cap, and to a lesser extent, the small-cap indices moved ahead. Footsie fell 27.5 points to 6,466.1; the mid-cap jumped 89.8 to 5,707.3 and the small-cap rose 5.2 to 2,449.1. It was another squeeze session with expectations of corporate activity providing much of the action.

But Billiton and Rio Tinto owed their strength to the overnight advance of commodity shares on Wall Street, where investors took the view the recovering world economy will trigger fresh demand. Billiton gained 18p to 187.5p and Rio 92.5p to 1,004p.

Imperial Chemical Industries duly clinched its £1.7bn sale to the US Huntsman group and rose 23.5p to 659p; at one time the shares were down 25.5p.

BT firmed 9p to 1,084p on Goldman Sachs support and Thames Water rose 27.5p to 915.5p with Credit Lyonnais offering support.

Investec Henderson Crosthwaite put J Sainsbury, trading statement today on its sell list and Teather & Greenwood moved Scotia, the drugs group, from buy to sell. Sainsbury firmed 5.5p to 375p and Scotia, ending development of a cancer drug, fell 13p to 126p.

On the takeover front Alexander Russell, the aggregates group, tumbled 25p to 112.5p after calling off talks with RMC, up 53p to 918p.

CA Courts held at 165p; after the market closed it was announced that the company's independent director, Henry Cubbon, had rejected a 160p management buy-out and the bid had been dropped.

Polypipe firmed 9.5p higher to 202p as IML, up 27p to 299p, produced a 200p cash offer. IML, the computer consultancy group, rose 26p to 120p, as a takeover approach, presumably from interests related to former chairman Wayne Channon, was signalled. Mr Channon and friends have been stake building VDC, distributing products

to vets, gained 30p to 175p after a 190p bid was indicated.

Fife, an ironmongery group now largely a cash shell, rose 5.5p to 66.5p with disco chain Northern Leisure displaying predatory intentions. Any deal would, in effect, be a cash raising exercise by the dancing group.

Lasmo gushed 19.25p to 139.75p, seemingly on institutional interest, although some wondered about corporate action. Rank, up 21.75p to 271.25p and, yet again, Pilkington, 5p to 84.5p, were drawn into takeover speculation.

The mid-cap index's progress was in part due to a recovery by engineering and packaging and paper shares. Glywedd improved 18p to 219p, Premier Farnell 17.5p to 245p and Rexham 16.5p to 234p.

The improving housing market helped MFI, the furniture chain, achieve a 7p gain to 49.5p.

Recent high flyers, such as Dixons, down 84p to 1,387p, were at a low ebb, and Astra Zeneca's headache continued with a 76p fall to 2,650p. The

NORTHERN PETROLEUM, an oil group which has collapsed from nearly 60p to 2.5p, doubled to 5p as a rescuer materialised.

Bruce Rowan, a shareholder, is pumping £100,000 into the group in exchange for shares and hoping to arrange further finance. His holding will remain below 29.9 per cent. Derek Musgrove, ex-RioTinto, becomes managing director, and oil analyst David Roberts has joined the board. Ellis & Partners become stockbrokers.

Waste Recycling fell 17.5p to 459p despite bullish noises from BT Alex Brown. It said: "We continue to expect the stock to outperform on a longer term view, given the group's well-above-average forecast growth profile."

Food group John Lusty firmed 1p to 5.5p on director buying, and Intelligent Environments jumped 30.5p to 105p after an investment meeting.

London Pacific's high-flying display took it a shade too close to the sun and the shares fell 75p to 288p. Their giddy display lifted the price 288p in two days as the market grew excited about its US Internet associations. In November the shares were down to 155p.

On Otef 1Collector, an Internet auction and antiques business which has moved ahead strongly, fell 70p to 310p. A company related to French tycoon Bernard Arnault, who runs LVMH, has taken a 20 per cent interest at 238p a share.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.3 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 93,567
GILTS INDEX: 111.03 -3.07

Booker's banks agree £700m refinancing

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

BOOKER, the struggling cash-and-carry chain, attempted to draw a line under its past problems yesterday with a £700m refinancing programme with its banks.

The new facility, struck with a syndicate of 21 banks, lasts until December 2001 and gives Booker a breathing space during which it can attempt to pay down its huge debt burden, which reached £442m at Booker's December year end and has risen to more than £500m since then.

Stuart Rose, the former Argos chief executive who took the reins at Booker last year, said: "The refinancing is a key step for us. It gives us the space to press ahead with our disposal programme, which will leave us with our core cash-and-carry operation which is a good, undervalued asset. This business is not knackered."

Mr Rose said talks were progressing to sell its food service business, which is worth over £100m. Discussions are also continuing on the sale of the Arbor Acres chicken business and the Harvest McConnell fish processing division.

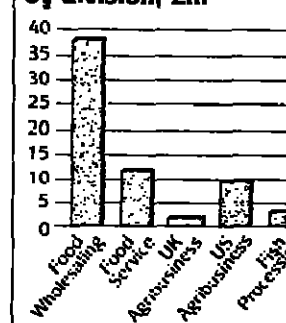
The announcement came as Booker unveiled a grim set of full-year figures showing that the group had slumped to a £71m loss in the full year to December after £94m of exceptional charges. These included losses on disposals, charges related to the over-

BOOKER: AT A GLANCE

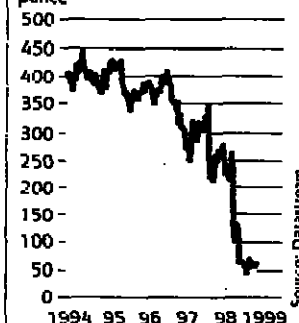
Market value: £159m, share price 64p (1p)

Five-year record	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Turnover (£bn)	3.7	4.2	4.4	5.2	5.1
Pre-tax profits (£m)	69.8	62.8	13.0	7.4	(71.7)
Earnings per share (p)	21.2	22.8	(4.7)	19.7	(39.0)
Dividends per share (p)	22.4	23.1	23.8	24.0	-

Operating profit by division, £m



Share price



spend on the Heartland distribution project and £13m of rationalisation costs. Stripping out exceptional charges, trading profits also fell from £76m to £22m.

The company said it expected to incur a further £50m of charges in the current year. These relate to losses on the £4m disposal of its Booker Wholesale Foods operation and a further £20m to "sort out" its cash-and-carry operations. Further job losses, in addition to the 900 announced in November, are not ruled out.

Mr Rose is confident he can rescue Booker but it is likely to be a long and frustrating journey for shareholders. They have

seen the share price slump from almost 300p last summer to just 64p at yesterday's close as a series of profits warnings took their toll, and first Somerset and then Budgens walked away from merger talks. To add insult to injury, the dividend has been scrapped for the foreseeable future.

The road back to respectability depends on how much Mr Rose can make the expensively developed but chronically underutilised Booker assets sweat.

Booker plans to concentrate on its core chain of 178 cash-and-carry depots, but more product needs to be pushed through

Caverdale completes transformation

By CLIFFORD GERMAN

THE EIGHTYEAR transformation of Caverdale from a loss-making motor dealer into a specialist retailer and distributor of clothing and accessories to fast-growing niche markets, including motor-cycling, sailing, cycling and fitness centres, is complete.

This follows the disposal of both the former Godfrey Davis motor dealerships in 1997 and the industrial products division last July, and the acquisition of two leisure marine companies in January this year. It has been a tumultuous ride. Last year turnover

plunged from £251m to £71m and operating profits from £7.1m to £4.7m. However, the ongoing and acquired businesses grew their sales by 60 per cent and profits quadrupled to £3.6m. After paying interest costs, profit before tax rose by 40 per cent to £6.04m, including disposal profits of £2.3m.

Including special dividends, shareholders have received back more than they subscribed in rights issues and capital calls. Arid Nerdum, the executive chairman, said yesterday: "The group has four significant institutional shareholders with 14 per cent of the shares, and the directors own a further 26 per cent. Capital expenditure is likely to fall from last year's £10m to less than £2m if there are no further acquisitions."

The three ongoing divisions now contribute shares of roughly 50:35:15 to profits. Over time the proportions are expected to even out, but all operate in relatively fragmented markets with scope to expand by acquisitions and organic growth.

All three divisions are targeted at what Mr Nerdum calls "passion" products - low interest rates are encouraging consumers to spend.

The latest figures are in line with market forecasts. Ed Wright at broker Dresdner Kleinwort Benson is not changing his forecast of £5.2m and earnings of £1.9p in the current year, rising to £7.4m and 16.6p in 2000.

But the shares have underperformed the market in the past 12 months and even after a jump of 11.5p to 124p yesterday still look attractive, at less than eight times forward earnings.

Bernie flags off two-course race

BERNIE ECCLESTONE, head of Formula One, has managed to get Nicola Foulston of Brands Hatch and the owners of the rival Silverstone racing circuit to compete for the right to hold the British Grand Prix, his UK money-spinner.

The British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC) owns Silverstone and has the contract with Mr Ecclestone to host the British Grand Prix until 2001. The BRDC recently tabled a restructuring plan to its 800-plus members, outlining how it would commercialise the historic Silverstone racetrack.

The BRDC is keen to keep Silverstone out of the grip of Ms Foulston. She hasn't tabled an official bid yet, but yesterday she published a two-page open letter to members of the BRDC in a car magazine. She said she accepted the BRDC's proposals for restructuring, but she still wants to buy Silverstone.

She has said previously that

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK



Mr Ecclestone has agreed to give her the British Grand Prix for 10 years if she wins Silverstone. The BRDC fears this is just Mr Ecclestone pitting the two against each other in order to bid up the price of the grand prix. You can see why Mr Ecclestone got where he is today...

In the bag...

TETLEY GROUP, the world's second-biggest tea-bag company, yesterday made its second top management change in a month, appointing Stuart Wallis as non-executive chairman.

Mr Wallis is a heavyweight City figure. He chairs Seton School Healthcare and John Mansfield Group, and he used to head Octopus Publishing.

Bowater and Fisons, Tetley sources hope his arrival signals that the tea-bag group no longer considers itself an acquisition target, following last summer's pulled plan.

Last month Leon Allan, chairman and chief executive, and Roger Price, finance director, stepped aside in favour of internal candidates Kenneth Pringle and Peter Undsworth respectively.

Taking control

SIR ROY MCNULTY, chairman of Shorts Brothers, the Belfast aerospace company, was yesterday named chairman of National Air Traffic Services (NATS) by Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott.

Last year the Government said it wanted to sell or float 51 per cent of the service, which runs air-traffic control centres at Prestwick in Scotland and Swanwick, near Southampton. The latter will not be fully up and running for several years, so any privatisation concerning NATS is some way off.

Which is just as well, as Mr Prescott has still to persuade several Labour backbenchers and recalcitrant trade unionists that part-privatising air-traffic control is a good idea.

Sir Roy will receive a salary of £100,000 for working four days a week, and his term of office at NATS is two-and-a-half years from 1 May 1999. He replaces Sir Malcolm Field, chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority.

Stoddart's day

MICHAEL STODDART, chairman of Electra, could be excused for being a bit tense yesterday as he presented the case against 3i's hostile bid for the investment trust.

Mr Stoddart said it was his

Wembley discusses stadium complex rebuild

By PETER TRAL LARSEN

WEMBLEY, the leisure group that last month sold Wembley Stadium to the Football Association so it can be rebuilt, has held talks with property groups about redeveloping the complex around the stadium.

"When you build a new stadium it always acts like a magnet," Nigel Potter, Wembley's chief executive, said yesterday. "We have had some discussions with property companies about the possibilities for the site."

Although Wembley no longer owns the famous twin towers, it still controls much of the land around the stadium as well as the Wembley Arena and conference centre. Analysts believe Wembley is likely to form a joint venture with a property developer to redevelop the site, which could attract retailers and other leisure operators.

"When you are sitting on 40 acres of land in that location you are in a good position to negotiate with developers," said Peter Joseph, an analyst with stockbrokers Peel Hunt.

The news emerged as Wembley reported a three-fold jump in pre-tax profits for the year to last December to £35.2m, boosted by an £8.4m gain as a result of property revaluations. Underlying pre-tax profits rose by 8 per cent to £26.8m.

Claes Hultman, the chairman, said the company was planning to return "a substantial proportion" of the proceeds of the stadium sale to shareholders. It is looking to minimise the tax liabilities for shareholders and expects to make an announcement in the next few months. Wembley received £100m from the sale.

After paying tax and settling a liability in the US, the group will be left with about £60m. However, Mr Potter said the group had decided against a large acquisition.

According to analysts, the stadium sale has highlighted Wembley's value. Mr Joseph calculates that the group's assets and businesses have a combined value of about £250m - equivalent to 44p a share. Yesterday, Wembley shares rose 10p to 340.5p.

38th wedding anniversary. He said he was "aware of the clash but could do nothing about it."

This may not have meant any great discord in the Stoddart household. Mr Stoddart added that he "always remembered [the date] but his wife didn't".

Kinkel business

GERMANY'S former foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, has popped up as an adviser to Deutsche Telekom, the recently privatised phone giant. The group says Mr Kinkel's "foreign policy expertise will be available to Ron Sommer, Deutsche's chief executive". Some Germans wonder whether Mr Kinkel has been hired for other reasons as well. He was, after all, head of Germany's secret service before becoming Helmut Kohl's foreign minister.

Mr Kohl himself has bounced back from electoral defeat by becoming a member of the advisory board of Credit Suisse.

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FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES									
Country	Starting Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	5 year
UK	1.0000			0.6216			0.6220	0.6660	
Australia	2.5282	2.5275	2.5268	1.5712	1.5718	1.5717	1.6637		
Canada	20.642	20.642	20.626	12.838	12.838	12.838	13.7603		
France	60.546	60.541	60.152	37.556	37.554	37.417	40.748		
Germany	2.9379	2.9362	2.9340	1.4905	1.4902	1.4901	1.5868		
Hong Kong	11.131	11.131	11.131	6.8226	6.8226	6.8226	7.4278		
Italy	9.9016			0.9319			1.0000		
Japan	1.5046	8.9657	8.9657	5.6103	5.6103	5.6108	5.5996		
Netherlands	3.8247	3.8247	3.8247	1.9124	1.9124	1.9124	2.0446		
Spain	166.84	8.967	8.973	1.5718	1.5717	1.5717	1.6637		
Sweden	2.9358	2.9358	2.9166	1.8248	1.8248	1.8248	1.9558		
Switzerland	487.02	4.8702	4.8702	303.83	303.83	303.83	324.35		
US	12.4657	12.4657	12.4657	7.7451	7.7451	7.7451	8.3024		
Yemen	1.1821	1.1799	1.1794	0.7348	0.7348	0.7348	0.7876		
Zimbabwe	290.72	1.1821	1.1794	0.7348	0.7348	0.7348	0.7876		
Other	181.17	190.0	188.8	118.86	118.86	118.86	127.363		
Malaysia	6.1134	6.2448	6.4666	3.9000	3.9000	3.9000	4.0100		
Mexico	13.332			2.0027			2.0713		
Netherlands	3.3013	3.2787	3.2787	2.0027	2.0027	2.0027	2.0446		
New Zealand	2.9826	2.9822	2.9822	1.9546	1.9546	1.9546	1.9868		
Norway	12.4657	12.4657	12.4657	7.7451	7.7451	7.7451	8.3024		
Portugal	380.81	2.9826	2.9826	1.9546	1.9546	1.9546	1.9868		
Saudi Arabia	6.0332	6.0413	6.0413	3.7502	3.7409	3.7509	4.0179		
Singapore	2.7232	2.7136	2.7136	1.6827	1.6827	1.6827	1.8136		
South Africa	9.8097	9.8076	9.8076	1.7128	1.7128	1.7128	1.8539		
Spain	166.64	149.17	248.10	155.23	154.78	154.78	166.386		
Sweden	13.339	13.313	13.261	8.2931	8.2931	8.2931	8.8830		
Switzerland	2.4050	2.4002	2.3834	1.4924	1.4924	1.4925	1.5893		
US	1.6088			1.0000			0.9334		

OTHER SPOT RATES									
Country	Starting	Dollar	Country	Starting	Dollar				
Argentina	1.6008	0.9950	Oman	0.6113	0.3808				
Brazil	2.6827	1.6651	Pakistan	81.26	50.500				
Canada	13.3119	2.8789	Philippines	61.382	38.160				
China	56.721	35.257	Poland	6.070	3.9825				
Czech Rep	5.4619	3.3990	Croat	3.8532	3.4070				
Egypt	3913.8	243.8	Russia	61.957	25000.0				
Ghana	1.3935	35.52	South Korea	1954.7	1215.00				
Hong Kong	11.131	11.131	Taiwan	30.00	37.400				
India	68.841	42.790	Thailand	52.930	32.900				
Indonesia	13948.3	8670.0	Thailand	60.205	37.400				
Kuwait	0.4904	0.3049	Turkey	5.1683	380800				
Malaysia	6.1134	6.2448	US	6.0631	3.6725				
INTEREST RATES									
Country	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year	25 year
UK	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
US	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Germany	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
France	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Italy	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Spain	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Japan	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Canada	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Australia	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
South Africa	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
India	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
China	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Indonesia	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Malaysia	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Philippines	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Singapore	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Thailand	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Vietnam	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Yemen	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Zimbabwe	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
BOND YIELDS									
Country	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year	25 year
Australia	6.55	0.02	4.57	-0.04	4.68	-0.04	5.00	-0.04	5.27
Belgium	2.63	0.01	2.61	0.00	3.88	0.03	3.48	0.05	4.13
Canada	4.43	0.01	4.61	0.00	4.63	0.00	4.80	0.08	4.97
France	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Germany	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Greece	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Italy	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Japan	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Netherlands	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Spain	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Sweden	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
Switzerland	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
UK	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
US	2.63	-0.01	2.71	0.00	2.75	0.02	3.28	0.01	3.94
MONEY MARKET RATES									
Country	Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year			
Overnight 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
1 week 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
1 month 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
3 months 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
6 months 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
1 year 5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25				
LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES									
Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est. floor volume	Open interest				
Long Bond	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.02	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
German Bund	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
Italian Bond	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
Japan Govd Bd	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
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3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
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3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
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3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
3 M Euro	Jun-99	117.08	118.05	117.01	31575.00				
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SPORT

Olympic Games: Fantastic Four show benefits of high-tech facilities as golden hopes of the future flourish in Florida

Britain counts on magic of Disney

By NICK HARRIS
in Orlando

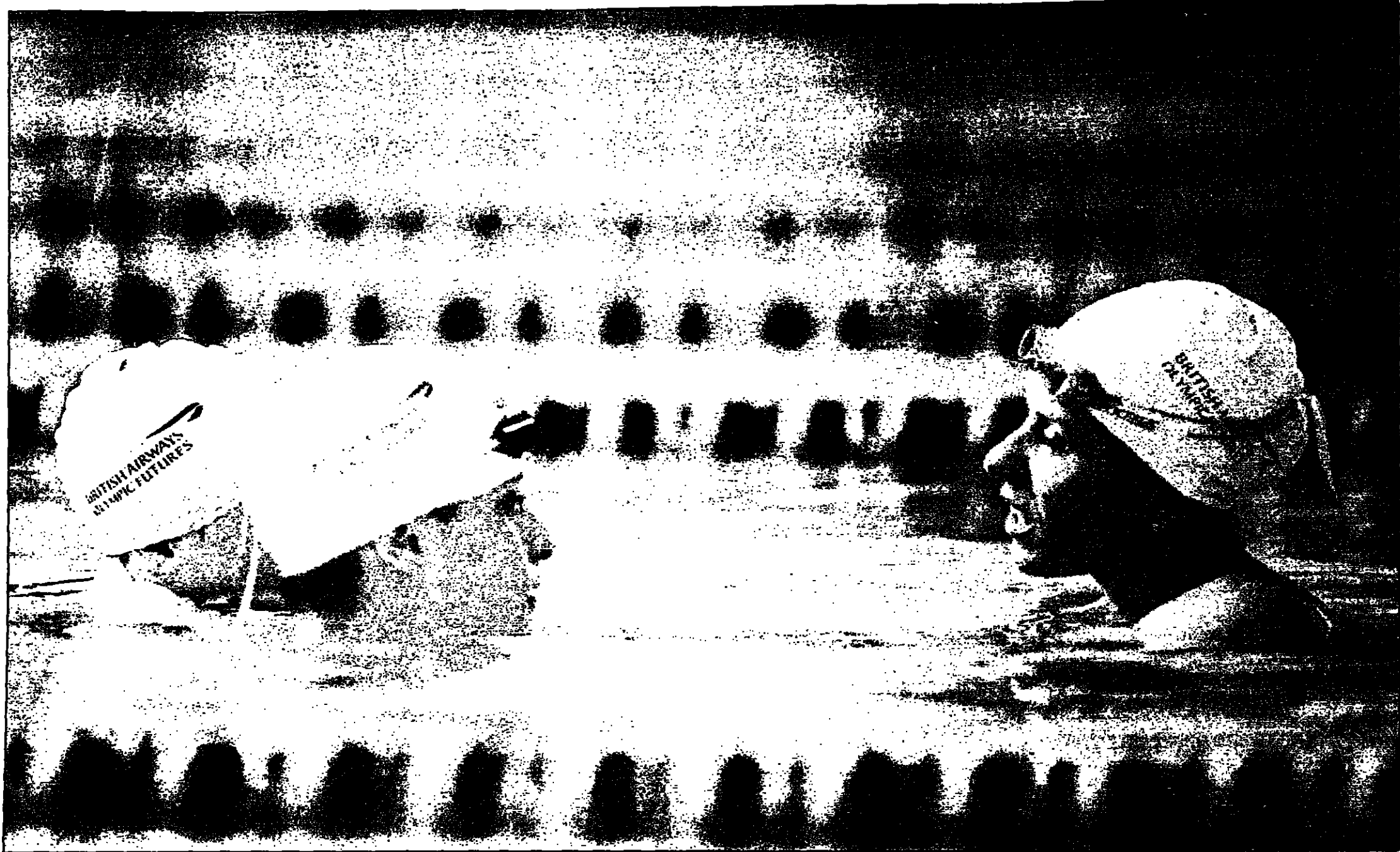
IF THE Fantastic Four sound like Disney characters, then it is partly because they are. Their names will not be familiar (yet), but attending a warm-weather training camp in Florida could change all that.

Mark Lewis-Francis, aged 16, is the fastest man in the world of his age over 100 metres. Nathan Palmer, also 16, is already breaking records set by Britain's No 1 hurdler, Colin Jackson. The self-styled Four – they each don a single blue glove to signal their allegiance to self-belief – are completed by Tim Benjamin, (a prospect over 200m) and Aaron Evans (400m), and were just a quartet among 110 of the country's brightest young sporting hopes to spend 10 days at the British Airways Olympic Futures camp in Orlando.

The young sportsmen and women, ranging from 12 to 18 and representing the cream of British athletics, swimming, cycling, judo, gymnastics, basketball and badminton, were put through their paces in an environment that British sporting heroes of the past could only have dreamt about. "I wish this type of project had been available when I was 13 or 14. It would've made such a difference," Sharron Davies, the Olympic medal-winner and "camp mother" to this next generation of hopefuls, said during a break in her motivational duties in Florida last month.

"The kids at the camp learn that their problems are the same as everyone else's, whether it's their schoolwork or training or money problems," she added of one benefit of bringing together such a group. Another benefit, Davies added, was that by being nurtured in a professional environment, the chances of burn-out and disillusionment could be diminished. Of her own Olympic triumph – winning silver in the 400m individual medley at the 1980 Games – she added: "When I looked at the board in Moscow all I thought was not 'I've won a silver medal' but 'great, now I can give up'."

Experiences such as Davies', the British Athletics Association hopes, may now become a thing of the past, and the first fruits of the camp could come as soon as July, when a number of those attending will form the backbone of the Great Britain team being sent to the European Youth Olympic Days (the youth Olympics) in Esbjerg in Denmark. Steve Backley and Dwain Chambers used past EYOD successes as springboards to greater things, and the BOA hopes that those competing this summer



Sharron Davies (right) gives Victoria Cook (left) and James Goddard the benefit of her experience as an Olympic medalist in the pool at the British training camp in Orlando

Allsport

will make similar progress, if not in time for next year's Sydney Olympics, then in time for Athens in 2004.

The aims of the three BAOF camps – the first took place for winter sports athletes last year at Crystal Palace and the third will take place ahead of next year's Millennial Games – are simple: to give young British sportsmen and women access to multi-sports facilities and give them a taste of what it might be like to compete in major events. While that might sound a modest ambition, it is actually a minor revolution. None of the 110 youngsters

had ever trained at a warm-weather camp prior to travelling to Orlando, and none had experienced anything close to the range of facilities they found when they got there. "For many of them, it's the first time they've been in a multi-sport environment. It's important they get used to being in camp situations," Mark Howell of the BOA, said. "The fact is that if BA [putting £350,000 into the project] weren't sponsoring it, it wouldn't be happening. That's something that needs to be addressed by the government."

For a nation that supposedly

cherishes its sporting idols, Britain is some way behind its competitors in providing the necessary facilities to achieve its goals. If nothing else, the tally of just 49 British Olympic post-war gold medals (the US has won well over 500, more than twice as many per head) speaks volumes. Most of the swimmers who attended the Orlando camp train in 25-metre pools at home (there are only a handful of 50-metre pools in the country) and have to get up well before 6am for the privilege. The gymnasts often train in halls that bear no resemblance to competition

surroundings. The cyclists and track and field athletes have to suffer the inclement British climate, and few of the 110 who went to Orlando are able to train as often as they would like because travelling every day to appropriate facilities is impractical. The main training centre at the Disney Wide World of Sport (which the senior Olympic squad uses regularly), has a first-class track, an enormous complex of gyms and weights rooms, its own baseball stadium and a velodrome (bought wholesale from the Atlanta Olympics), not to mention a 50-

metre swimming pool and specialist medical facilities a stone's throw away, and fine weather. For the duration of the camp, the BOA also provided the participants with workshops on nutrition, sports psychology, physiology, career development and working with the media.

Whether all this will actually pay dividends remains to be seen, but the coaching staff at the camp are adamant that it can do nothing but good. "These youngsters need to realise how good they are," Brian Hall, the athletics team director, said. "It's hard to make them realise

that they're the best young athletes in Britain and that they are the future," he added, and said that by treating them as such was one way to help realise their potential. In Tokyo in 1964, before Disney had even laid a foundation brick in Florida, Britain had a fantastic four gold medalists in Lynn Davies and Mary Rand (both long jump), Ann Packer (800m) and Ken Matthews (200m walk). Perhaps, when we realise that investing in our sporting future is no Mickey Mouse endeavour, future Games will see similar rewards and better.

SIX YOUNG MEDAL HUNTERS TO FOLLOW ON THE ROAD FROM ORLANDO



MOHAMMED FARAH
16-year-old athlete
3000m and cross-country

"The most exciting endurance talent we've had for a long time," said Brian Hall, the British athletics team manager, of Farah, who came to Britain from Somalia five years ago and is in the process of obtaining a British passport. "When I started running aged 11, I couldn't speak English well," Farah said. "Because I couldn't understand the directions during cross country races, I didn't know where to go and just followed the people in front." He learnt English (and the way) and now regularly wipes the floor with the opposition by over a minute. His hero is Haile Gebrselassie. "I like the way he runs. I'd like to do that. It would mean a great deal to run for Britain."



MARK LEWIS-FRANCIS
16-year-old athlete
100m

"The camp is going to help me a lot," Lewis-Francis, founder of the Fantastic Four, said. "Here, you're out training all week, every day, where at home I'd normally only train twice a week. You can spend a lot more time on it, not trying to get everything into the two sessions. I've learnt to take my time." He has recorded 10.49sec in his event and may have a chance of a relay place in the Sydney Olympics. "My starts need to be worked on, and I also run bending forward too much and I need to straighten up." Of the blue glove he and three team-mates wear in races, he said: "We're all going to wear it when we go home and take it forward with us."



NATHAN PALMER
16-year-old athlete
110m hurdles

Hoping to follow in Colin Jackson's footsteps, Palmer has already broken the 110m hurdles record that Britain's No 1 recorded at his age. Jackson did a time of 13.19sec, while Palmer has registered 12.96sec. A talented all-round sportsman, Palmer played rugby for Wales Under-16s and football at the Cardiff City school of excellence before deciding to concentrate on athletics. "The athletics was more a challenge. I got more out of it," he said. Like Mark Lewis-Francis, he's a member of the self-styled Fantastic Four, and, perhaps with an eye on the commercial future, always sports his Nike-logoed blue glove.



SALLY RUSBATCH
14-year-old swimmer
100m and 200m backstroke
national champion

"The camp has made me feel very professional," Rusbatch said. "We've had to keep a log book of swims, including heart-rate intensities, and how we feel after each swim." The 7am-9am and 1.30pm-3.30pm training sessions in Orlando offered the chance of a break from 5.15am starts and late-night finishes. "Managing school and sport is difficult. Sharron Davies gave us some valuable information. She said you can always go back to your education but you can't go back to your sport. She's been really friendly. I didn't think she'd be like that. I thought she'd be more professional [and aloof]."



REBECCA MASON
12-year-old gymnast
National Under-14 champion

"The gymnasiums here have more of a competition layout," said the Cheshire gymnast of the Orlando facilities. "And it's a lot warmer than at home." Becky, regarded as the brightest prospect in British gymnastics – started her sport at five but will have to wait until 2004 for a chance of competing in the Olympics. The minimum age in senior competition is now 16. With more muscle definition and power in her 4ft-something frame than most people will ever have, her favourite (and best) discipline is the asymmetric bars and her next target is the European Youth Olympic Days in Denmark in July.



STUART HOLDER
16-year-old badminton player
National Under-17
singles/doubles champion

"At home I've got a scholarship at a posh club, the Solihull racquets and health club," said Holder, who saw huge benefits in the BAOF camp. "Because all of us [the British badminton team] live in different areas of the country at home, it's hard to get together often, so the camp's good. So is the access to the physios and the other things like the workshops on psychology." He added that it had also been eye-opening to meet competitors from other events, even though some are sceptical of the merits of his sport. "They come up and say: 'Badminton? You just hit it over the net don't you?'"

Giggs plucky, not 'lucky'

Sir: While acknowledging the brilliance of the Ryan Giggs goal in the FA Cup semi-final replay on Wednesday night many of the TV pundits, and some sports journalists, referred to a "lucky bobble".

In scoring the goal Giggs beat Vieira, Dixon, Keown, Dixon (again), and Adams. The first player to touch the ball, after Giggs got hold of it in his own half, was David Seaman, when he picked it from the back of the Arsenal net.

"Bobbie" or not, to refer to anything about the goal as being "lucky" does a great injustice to Ryan Giggs, given that, in extra-time with his side down to 10 men, he ran clean through the best defence in England and scored to put Manchester United through to the FA Cup final.

As to whether it was the greatest goal ever, this is, of course, a matter of debate. It will certainly be a goal, and a match that will live long in the memory. DANIEL HAYNES
Forest Hill, London

Same old story

Sir: Why are football managers so transparent? When a referee makes an error, their reactions are completely predictable. "He's cost us the game! I couldn't believe that decision! I'd better not say any more."

Referees are not perfect, never have been, never will be. But they're the best means we have of enforcing the rules and

controlling hugely overpaid players. Referee Paul Durkin admitted this week that he missed a hand ball in the FA Cup semi-final between Newcastle and Tottenham for which he was roundly criticised. I'll have more sympathy with his critics when they tell their pampered players to stop trying to con officials and get fellow professionals sent off. GEORGE MITCHELL,
Apsley, Herts

Red intent

Sir: I cannot understand why there is a debate about the sending-off of Southampton's Claus Lundekvam at Villa Park last Saturday. The fact that the

linesman had flagged for another infringement was completely unknown to Lundekvam who went in with intent to commit a foul and the intent is what counts, not whether the ball is still live or not.

If a player kicks another in the penalty area while waiting for a corner or free-kick to be taken, the award is still a penalty and probably a red card – you don't say "oh, no problem mate, the ball is out of play at the moment – hit him again, why don't you?" Lundekvam sought to break the laws, had no chance of getting the ball and, regardless of the state of play, deserved his punishment. NIGEL CUBBAGE
Marleygate, Herts

Welsh wails

Sir: I look forward, optimistically, to Alan Watkins' Rugby column each week. However, my confidence is invariably misplaced as each time the bias with which the article is delivered leaves me feeling that this particular scribe should be consigned to the Pontypriid edition of your splendid newspaper! When will the wider view be expressed? Why no mention of Scotland's marvellous revival and awe-inspiring performance against the French? (Wales find redemption at church of Wembley, 13 April)

Also, what of the decline of our Gallic cousins? Mr Watkins' views

on his countrymen are welcome, but remember, a balanced perspective will always be more absorbing than blatant partiality. IAN MACKINNON
London

Open to debate

Sir: As the Five Nations' Championship moves into a new era, I would like to recommend some changes to the rules. For as long as I can remember, there has been concern over the paucity of open play and the predominance of kicking.

The last 10 or 15 years have seen the IRB tinker with the rules – changing the value of the try, the introduction of the

indirect free kick, the acceptance of lifting in the line out, etc. However, it is still too easy for a team to win without scoring a try.

My proposed changes are:
● Replace the line-out with a throw-in into open play (it is almost impossible to lose your own throw-in, so this would get the ball into play much quicker).
● Tries should remain worth five points, but conversions will no longer be available.

● Direct free-kicks should be confined to serious infringements – dangerous tackles, raking, dropping of scrums, intentional offside, etc. – and be worth five points. A yellow and/or red card should be shown to the offender.

All other infringements should be punished by indirect free-kicks, which would have to be run, rather than kicked. After all, rugby is all about running with the ball, rather than kicking. ANDREW BOWDLER
Working in Nepal with the International Nepal Fellowship

County Championship: Gloucestershire's fightback may be in vain while Leicestershire all-rounder cuts loose

Harvey delays Surrey's charge

AGAINST A backdrop of pristine white, the banks of freshly painted seats largely bereft of bums and the smart new perimeter fence strangely unburdened by advertising hoardings, Surrey assumed a position of some strength here yesterday - thanks to the efforts of their acting captain, Mark Butcher, and their sometime England leg-spinner Ian Salisbury - before a clatter of wickets in the evening sunshine introduced an unexpected element of doubt into today's proceedings.

Mike Smith, the Gloucestershire left-arm, responded to a first-innings deficit of 129 with a fine spell to remove four Surrey batsmen while Butcher held the fort for the hosts, moving serenely on towards a century that should ensure that Surrey start the final day as favourites to win.

Earlier Salisbury had found both lift and considerable turn while Alex Tudor generated exceptional pace, although his waywardness meant he went wicketless. But Gloucestershire's batsmen by and large had only themselves to blame for their predicament.

Resuming on 55 for 2 the day started inauspiciously for them with just seven runs coming from the first seven overs. In the eighth Mark Alleyne, trying to instil some urgency, was rapped on the back pad by Martin Bicknell as he tried to work an inswinger through mid-on and the captain's departure set the tone for the innings.

Tim Hancock, starting on 23, quietly made his way past the 50 mark before succumbing to Gary Butcher's first over for his new county, a tiny inside edge leaving the stumps in a fearful mess, and then Salisbury turned one away from Matt Windows and had him caught behind with the score at 118.

With Ian Harvey suffering from a stiff back after being welcomed to the delights of an English spring by Tuesday's freezing temperatures, Jeremy Snape came in ahead of the Australian all-rounder to join Jack Russell and see Gloucestershire through to lunch without further mishap. However, shortly afterwards Snape, playing forward to Salisbury, became the game's seventh bow victim.

BY ADAM SZRETER
at The Oval

Surrey 342 & 156-5
Gloucestershire 213

Two balls later Gloucestershire looked in complete disarray as Martyn Ball danced down the wicket to Salisbury, took an almighty heave and was comprehensively bowled, and when Jon Lewis followed, pushing hopefully at Bicknell and being taken at slip by Ally Brown, there were still 33 needed to avoid the follow on.

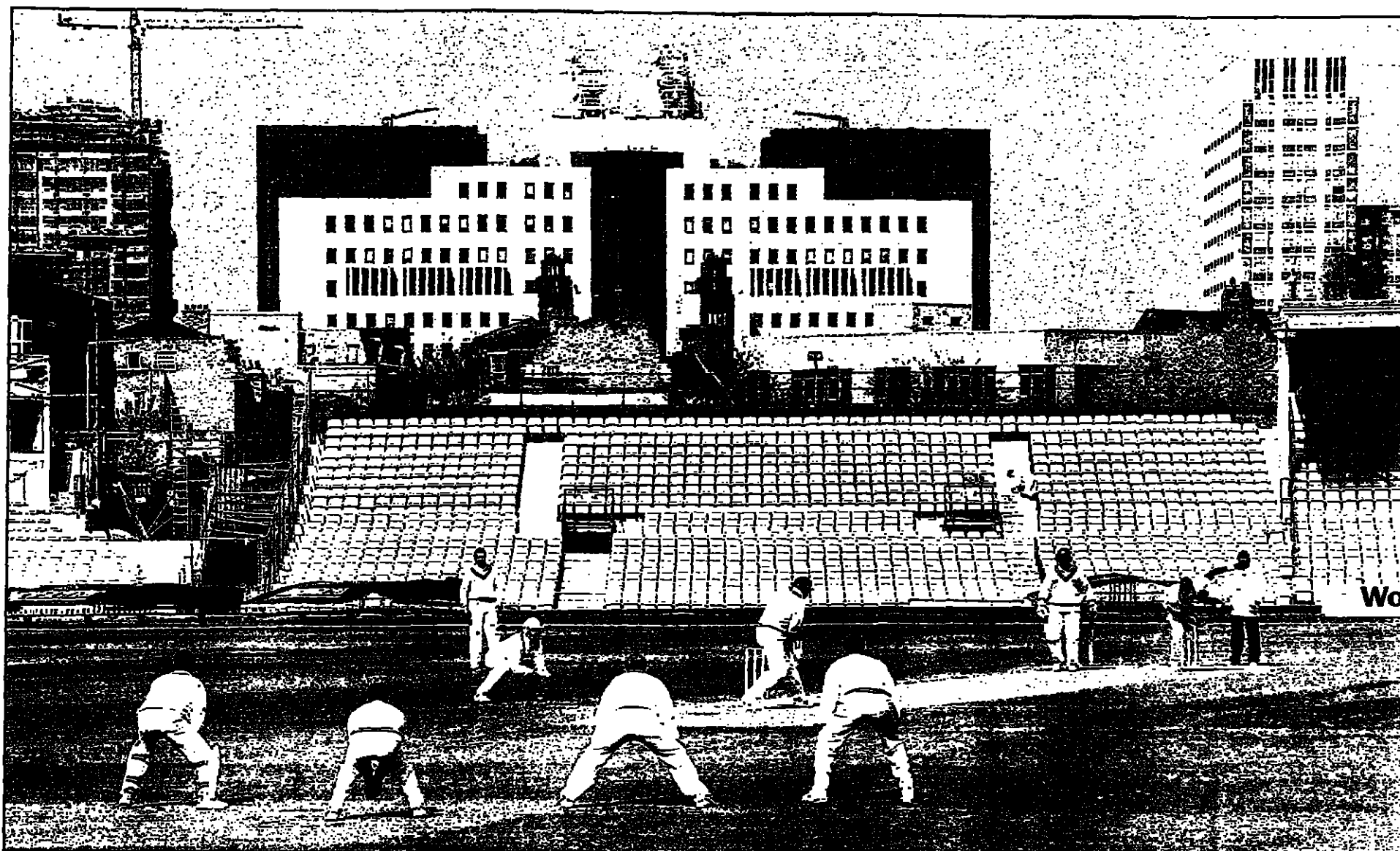
At this juncture Harvey finally appeared with Snape as his runner and while it took him some time to get going - 17 balls to be precise - when he did he allied Gloucestershire's worst fears with a series of meaty blows. He took a particular liking to Ben Hollis's bowling, taking 17 off one of his overs to see his side safely past their first target.

With mission accomplished, however, Harvey tried to pull Hollis for a second huge six over square leg and was caught in the deep, and when Smith fell second ball Gloucestershire were left with a sizeable arrears.

When Surrey batted again they lost Ian Ward in the first over of the innings, caught in the gully flailing at a wide one from Smith, and Jason Ratcliffe, on a pair, looked far from happy once more before Lewis found some extra lift to have him caught at second slip.

Nadeem Shahid, having survived a loud shout for leg before against Smith before tea, fell to a ball angled across him shortly afterwards while Brown and Hollis were both undone by balls from Smith that moved back in towards them.

It was an admirable effort by Smith but, with Butcher still there and the lead approaching 300, it is already beginning to look in vain.



The Surrey bowler Alex Tudor sends down a delivery as the slips wait in anticipation during yesterday's play against Gloucestershire at The Oval

David Ashdown

Lewis sparkles to end five-year wait Brown rushes to century record

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN
at Chelmsford

Essex 252 and 3-0
Leicestershire 424

That was the way of things for Essex as they tried - and most definitely failed - to fling a spanner in the works of the defending champions. This Leicestershire side is a masterpiece of engineering. The component parts seem to mesh perfectly every time they are started up. There was no better example than the sixth wicket partnership between Lewis and the superbly disciplined and able wicketkeeper Paul Nixon.

He had stuck around with his captain, James Whitaker, while the heat was taken out of the attack and the chill went from the early morning air and their stand of 67 did enough to loosen Essex's grip on affairs.

The disappointment of Whitaker falling when half a dozen short of 50 was soon forgotten as Nixon anchored an end content, like the crowd, to enjoy the Lewis show. He still reached a century himself - his second in consecutive Championship matches, albeit seven

months apart, since he took 101 off Surrey in the final match last September.

It occupied more than five and a half hours and was the 11th of a career that deserves greater recognition than it so far has. He is without doubt one of the leading wicketkeepers in the country along with Hampshire's Adrian Aymes and it is to be wondered just how much more either man has to do to attract selectorial attention.

Lewis on this form most certainly will. He may have missed out on a World Cup place but his two effortless sixes and 17 boundaries (the same number Nixon accrued) were the mark of a man who can do anything. He drove, cut, pulled, dabbled and clipped, the technique flawless, the athleticism and grace boundless. His timing was immaculate.

When Lewis stops being an enigma and becomes a cricketer he is something else. So are Leicestershire. The chances of Essex wiping out the 172-run deficit and going on to win this match are long, far longer than those of Leicestershire retaining their title this year.

DOUGIE BROWN, without a first-class century in 127 previous attempts, set the record straight with one of unique distinction as Warwickshire established a useful position despite another restricted day.

It was a day of records for Brown who scored not only the first hundred of the new Championship season but the earliest in the competition's history.

The 29-year-old all-rounder, who extended his score to 126 not out before the second of two stoppages for rain ended play, pipped Leicestershire's Paul Nixon to the honour of being quickest off the mark this year. The other statistic is due to the World Cup, the accommodation of which forced the fixture planners to usher in the domestic campaign earlier than ever, allowing Brown to claim a record held for 12 months by his new captain, Neil Smith, who made a Championship hundred on 17 April last year.

Brown's milestone owed something to the World Cup also; specifically, to his non-selection. Born in Stirling, he could have been there with Scotland had he not already made nine one-day appearances for England. But his fail-

BY JON CULLEY
at Edgbaston

Warwickshire 300-9
v Northamptonshire

ure to underline his all-rounder status with a hundred in any form of senior cricket has restricted his progress.

"It is no secret that I have underachieved batting-wise," he said, reflecting on a record that had included 17 first-class 50s. "After I was not picked for the one-dayers in Australia it was on the cards that I would not make the World Cup squad and I decided it was time to put in some solid work."

"I was aware of how many times I'd gone past 50 but then given it away on 70 or 80. So I spent the winter working on my whole approach to batting, technical and mental. I set myself a target of three centuries this season and it is good to have chalked off one of them so soon."

Brown has no regrets about opting to play for England even though he would have been a certainty for the Scotland squad. "I would love to be playing in the World Cup but I made my mind up a long time ago that I was going to be English qualified and that is something I have got to live with."

But I'll be very pleased if Scotland do well and I see no reason why they can't upset a few people along the way and make them work hard for their victories," Brown said.

The Edgbaston wicket offered assistance and movement to the pace bowlers and the former England international Devon Malcolm returned 6 for 116 off 29 overs for Northants, although he has bowled better for lesser reward and was flattered by those figures.

Graeme Welch (23) helped Brown add 61 in 23 overs for the seventh wicket and then Keith Piper (34), who had been forced to retire on Wednesday with a bruised index finger, returned to the wicket to add 50 with Brown. There was just time for the last man, Ed Giddins, to leg-gance Taylor for four to take the total up to 300 and that third batting period before rain returned at 5pm with a total of 44 overs lost in the day.

Paul Taylor bowled an immaculate line throughout the day and finished with 2 for 57 from 31 overs.

PPP Healthcare County Championship

Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

EDGBASTON (Day 2 of 4): Warwickshire have scored 300 for 9 wickets against Northamptonshire

Warwickshire won toss
WARWICKSHIRE — First Innings Overweight 126-3

First Innings Count

	Runs	6s	4s	Bs	Mins
D L Hemp c Ripley b Malcolm	64	0	8	158	203
R K Piper b Malcolm	34	0	3	57	142
D R Brown not out	136	0	18	235	390
"M K Smith c Sales b Taylor	8	0	2	16	19
A F Giles b Swann	8	0	1	29	38
G Welch c Hayden b Malcolm	23	0	3	70	77
T A Munton lbw b Malcolm	1	0	0	9	7
E S V Gidins not out	4	0	1	3	4
Extras (lb 5)	6				
Total (for 9, 107 overs)	300				

Falls: 1-0, 2-36, 3-59, 4-138, 5-159, 6-182, 7-243, 8-293, 9-295.
Bowling: D L Malcolm 29-3-116-6, J P Taylor 31-11-57-2, G P Swann 16-7-43-1, D Pollard 15-2-46-0, A L Penberthy 14-7-32-0.
Umpires: M J Kitchen and A G T Whitehead.

Durham v Worcestershire

RIVERSIDE (Day 3 of 4): Durham are leading Worcestershire by one run with 6 first-innings wickets in hand

WORCESTERSHIRE — First Innings 152 (Leatherdale 85, Brown 6-25)

DURHAM — First Innings Overweight 32-1

First Innings Count

	Runs	6s	4s	Bs	Mins
J J B Lewis lbw b de la Pena	52	0	8	83	138
J E Morris c Rhodes b Illingworth	51	1	6	83	142
A Daley c Rhodes b Lampitt	25	0	5	56	61
"D C Cooley not out	7	0	0	32	33
P D Bollinger not out	7	0	0	32	33
Extras (lb 2)	7				
Total (for 4, 46 overs)	153				

Falls: 1-5, 2-96, 3-138, 4-138.
To Bat: IM P Speight, M M Belts, J Wood, S J E Brown, S J Harrison.
Bowling: A Sheeraj 10-2-35-1, J M de la Pena 12-5-43-1, D A Leatherdale 10-2-40, C G Lipson 5-0-32-0, R K Illingworth 12-3-29-1, S R Lampitt 6-5-7-1.
Umpires: J C Balderson and G I Burgess.

Essex v Leicestershire

CHELMSFORD (Day 3 of 4): Essex are trailing Leicestershire by 170 runs with all second-innings wickets in hand

ESSEX — First Innings 252 (Pritchard 91)

LEICESTERSHIRE — First Innings Overweight 122-4

First Innings Count

	Runs	6s	4s	Bs	Mins
T J Whitaker c Peters b Cowan	44	0	6	103	157
P A Nixon lbw b Fox	121	0	17	232	349

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

C C Lewis c Rollins b Irani 139 2 17 199 267
J M Dakin c Pritchard b Grayson 8 0 16 23

M S Kasprowicz c Sub b Irani 9 0 1 22 24
J Omond c Pritchard b Irani 6 0 1 24 29

M T Brimmon not out 1 0 0 13 4
Extras (lb 8 nb 6) 22

Total (136.1 overs) 224
Falls: 1-36, 2-43, 3-83, 4-86, 5-193, 6-381, 7-408, 8-408, 9-422.

Bowling: M C Irani 39-9-119-3, A P Cowan 27-6-83-2, R C Irani 23-1-5-59-4, P M Such 21-2-3-70-0, A P Grayson 26-10-55-1, S G Law 5-4-25-0.
ESSEX — Second Innings

P J Pritchard not out 2 0 0 6 2
D D J Robinson not out 0 0 0 2

Total (for 0, 1 overs) 2
To Bat: I M Flanagan, S G Law, R C Irani, A P Grayson, S D Peters, R J Rollins, A P Cowan, M C Irani, P M Such.

Bowling: M S Kasprowicz 1-0-2-0.
Umpires: R Julian and R Palmer.

Lancashire v Sussex

OLD TRAFFORD (Day 3 of 4): Sussex have scored 285 for 5 wickets against Lancashire

SUSSEX — Montgomerie 62, Pearce 77

Umpires: N A Mullender and G Sharp.
No play Thursday due to rain.

Middlesex v Kent

LORD'S (Day 3 of 4): Middlesex are trailing Kent by 3 runs with 9 second-innings wickets in hand

KENT won toss
MIDDLESEX — First Innings 254 (Nash 62no, Langer 55, Thompson 4-61)

KENT — First Innings Overweight 21-1

First Innings Count

	Runs	6s	4s	Bs	Mins
R W T Key c Kettleborough b Tunnell	85	0	9	256	297
T R Ward c Johnson b Hewitt	1	0	0	38	52
A P Wells c Nash b Hewitt	2	0	1	24	43
A Symonds c Ramprakash b Hewitt	69	1	10	89	97
M J Walker c Langer b Hewitt	1	0	0	26	92
IS A Marsh c Weekes b Tunnell	43	0	6	76	92
"M V Fleming c Nash b Weekes	18	0	3	49	42
D W Headley c Ramprakash b Cook	12	0	0	32	35
M M Patel c Shah b Hewitt	18	0	2	37	44
J B Thompson not out	0	0	0	8	8
Extras (lb 10 nb 4)	26				
Total (109.1 overs)	266				

Falls: 1-10, 2-27, 3-59, 4-164, 5-170, 6-220, 7-255, 8-255, 9-264.
Bowling: S J Cook 26-6-83-2, R L Johnson 18-5-52-0, J P Hewitt 25-11-10-0-5, O A Shah 3-0-12-0, P C R Tunnell 26-6-45-2, P N Weekes 11-2-32-1.

Middlesex — Second Innings

R A Kettleborough c Marsh b Patel 8 0 28 33
J L Langer not out 14 0 1 36 49

J P Hewitt not out 4 0 1 9 13
Extras (lb 1 nb 2) 3

Surrey v Gloucestershire

THE POSTER'S OVAL (Day 3 of 4): Surrey are leading Gloucestershire by 285 runs with 5 second-innings wickets in hand

SURREY — First Innings 342 (Ward 78, M A Butcher 68, Smith 4-93)

GLoucestershire — First Innings Overweight 55-2

First Innings Count

	Runs	6s	4s	Bs	Mins
T H Hancock b G P Butcher	53	0	7	131	167
"M W Alleyne lbw b Bicknell	10	0	1	29	48
M G N Windovers c Barry b Salisbury	12	0	2	52	75
J W Snape lbw b Salisbury	21	0	4	42	56
R C Russell not out	36	0	4	83	113
M C J Ball b Salisbury	0	0	0	2	0
J Lewis c Brown b Bicknell	6	0	1	13	19
J J Harvey c Shand b Hollis	30	1	4	37	48
A M Smith c M A Butcher b Salisbury	0	0	2	2	2
Extras (lb 10 nb 12 nb 4)	23				
Total (172.2 overs)	313				

Falls: 1-26, 2-39, 3-62, 4-110, 5-118, 6-147, 7-147, 8-160, 9-212.
Bowling: M P Bicknell 22-7-56-3, A J Tudor 17-2-46-0, I D K Salisbury 17-2-64-4, G P Butcher 9-4-19-1, B C Hollis 7-1-42-1.

Surrey — Second Innings

"M A Butcher not out 98 0 17 139 184
J D Ward c Barnett b Smith 0 0 0 4 3

J D Ruffell c Alleyne b Lewis 6 0 0 30 42
N Shabid c Ball b Smith 23 0 3 55 79

A D Brown c Russell b Smith 4 0 0 15 12
B C Hollis lbw b Smith 10 0 1 24 15

J M Batty not out 9 0 2 21 21
Extras (lb 11) 6

Total (for 5, 48 overs) 156
Falls: 1-1, 2-32, 3-111, 4-119, 5-133

To Bat: G P Butcher, A J Tudor, I D K Salisbury, M P Bicknell
Bowling: A M Smith 13-3-23-4, J Lewis 11-2-43-1, M W Alleyne 10-2-33-0, M C J Ball 13-1-47-0, J N Snape 1-0-4-0.

Umpires: B Dugdeston and J F Steele

Other Match

Cambridge University v Somerset

PERINER (Day 1 of 3): Cambridge University are trailing Somerset by 825 runs with 9 first-innings wickets in hand

SOMERSET won toss
SOMERSET — First Innings

J C o Sayers b Lowe 139 2 13 223 272
P B Coe not out 140 0 12 304 324

J D Kerr not out 0 0 2 53 50

Hewitt's haul contains Kent

THE PERSISTENCE of the Middlesex bowlers, above all the brisk James Hewitt, prevented the visitors from taking total command yesterday. While the Australian Andrew Symonds and Robert Key were compiling their century stand for the fourth wicket, the Kent captain Matthew Fleming's stated ambition to go above 400 remained possible. But wickets were chipped away at the right times by Middlesex, restricting Kent's advantage to 32 and setting up a one-day, one-innings game.

Hewitt, elbows flapping and blond hair flopping, bowled four hard-working spells and earned the fifth five-wicket bag of his career. Trevor Ward was persuaded to try his favourite pull shot too early in the day, and was well caught by Richard Johnson running away at mid-on. Alan Wells flashed hard and wide and was acrobatically taken by David Nash. Symonds drove early and elicited another salmon leap, this time from Mark Ramprakash at backward point. Matthew Walker cut hard to gully and Min Patel's resistance late in the day ended with a clip to square leg.

Phil Tunnell, wheeling away at the Nursery End, bowled even more economically than Hewitt, and he began to show that probing, thoughtful variation of pace and flight that sits strangely with his casual appearance.

For the Kent batsmen, it was a story of the nearby men. After his England A tour to Zimbabwe and South Africa, the

BY JOHN COLLIS
at Lord's

Middlesex 254 & 29-1
Kent 266

burly young opener Robert Key needed this confidence-boosting innings - his overseas batting average barely limped into double figures. He played with circumspection to get within sight of the first Championship century of the season - did anyone have money on Dougie Brown? - before Tunnell fooled him, and he turned the ball tamely to forward short leg.

Steve Mather batted robustly until Tunnell cheated him of a 50 but it was Symonds who really threatened to take the game irretrievably away from Middlesex. By and large the batting in this game has been affected by the chilly weather and early-season uncertainty, but Symonds instantly raised the temperature - even shedding a layer of thermals once he had warmed up - and seemed to adjust well to the pace of an April wicket in England after an indifferent Australian season.

Those who fielded to Symonds during his seasons at Gloucestershire will remember the force with which he hits the ball, and sometimes yesterday it bounced across the moist turf as if on concrete. Too soon, though, he was gone, and the balance of the match was restored. With the evening dismissal of the luckless Richard Kettleborough, however, this still lay with Kent.

Giggs' goal a winner in every respect

The perfectly timed strike by the Manchester United winger will live long in the memory of every football supporter.

By Glenn Moore



SINCE THE explosion of televised football coverage the game's currency, goals, has been debased. A goal is still worth the same as it was 30 years ago but the best ones no longer sear themselves into the memory in the way they used to. Then the only goals seen were the relative few watched in the flesh, and the dozen or so per week that featured on *The Big Match* and *Match of the Day*. Since most goals, then as now, are ordinary a great goal, such as Justin Fashanu's turn and volley for Norwich against Liverpool, stuck in the mind for years.

Now every goal scored in the professional game is recorded with the result that there is usually one Premiership cracker in *Match of the Day* while the aficionados and insomniacs who watch *Nationwide League Extra* see half-a-dozen a week. It thus takes something really special to stand out. David Ginola's juggled volley against Ferencváros, Trevor Sinclair's overhead kick for Queen's Park Rangers, Michael Owen's World Cup sprint.

Ryan Giggs' goal for Manchester United against Arsenal at Villa Park on Wednesday night was that league. Actually, it was better. The context, an extra-time goal in a stunning FA Cup semi-final replay, eclipses all but Owen's goal and, not only was Giggs' goal better, it was also a winner.



Ryan Giggs is mobbed by his Manchester United team-mates after his extraordinary extra-time goal at Villa Park on Wednesday sent Alex Ferguson's team through to the FA Cup final. Reuters

When Giggs picked up the ball, well inside his own half, from a loose pass by Patrick Vieira, there was enough space in front of him to prompt the thought: "Go on, run at them, see what happens." Giggs in full flight is one of the most thrilling sights in the game but it is rarely seen, either he chooses a safer option or the opposition are too tight on him.

On Wednesday night there were no better options. United, down to 10 men, were unable to support their attacks. Arsenal,

tired themselves and committed to pushing forward, were slow to get close to Giggs. By the time they did he had picked up a head of steam. His 70-yard dribble took him past three of the Gunners' famous back four - Lee Dixon, Martin Keown and Tony Adams - plus Vieira. Dixon he beat twice.

With respect to Barnsley, this made it rather better than Ginola's recent FA Cup goal, even if Giggs, having come on as a substitute, was fresher than his opponents. Yet it

looked, as he approached the six-yard box, that he had run out of space but the finish, a rising drive into the roof of the net, was as good as the preamble.

Inevitably, after a high like that, yesterday morning brought a hangover as United counted the cost. Giggs, who suffered a late ankle injury, is unlikely to play against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday but should be available for next week's European Cup semi-final second leg against Juventus. The condition of Peter

Schmeichel, who was hobbling by the end having damaged his left side making the third of a trio of fine saves from Dennis Bergkamp, is still uncertain. So worried was Alex Ferguson he even considered putting Paul Scholes in goal. Denis Irwin, who was injured in the first match, is also doubtful while Keane will miss the Premiership match with Aston Villa on 1 May following his dismissal.

Should United beat Juventus, they will have another problem. The FA Cup final is four days before the European Cup final against Bayern Munich or Dynamo Kiev in Barcelona.

As for Arsenal, they have an extra two days to recover before playing Wimbledon on Monday. Marc Overmars and bruised confidence, having been outplayed for much of both matches, are their biggest problems. Chelsea, incidentally, host Leicester on Sunday.

The final will, surprisingly, be the first between the Uniteds of Manchester and Newcastle though they have made 26 previous appearances between them. They have met twice in the competition, Manchester prevailing in both the fifth round in 1990 and the semi-final in 1993. They have also met once at Wembley, in the Charity Shield in August 1996, Manchester winning 4-0.

In addition Manchester United, now unbeaten in 24 matches since December, have not lost to Newcastle in five matches since the 5-0 drubbing at St James' Park in October 1996. Should the Magpies bother

turning up, then? Definitely. Just remember, Arsenal were unbeaten in 21 matches, and had won four and drawn two of their previous six games with Manchester United, when they arrived at Villa Park on Wednesday.

Alan Shearer v Jaap Stam, Dietmar Hamann v Roy Keane, Andy Cole v his old team, Ruud Gullit v Alex Ferguson. It could be a contest to savour, but we will be very, very lucky if the drama matches the night Giggs juggled at the Villa.

Poles are on the brink

POLAND

THE POLISH football association (PZPN) said yesterday it would continue to defy FIFA's demand to name a date for a leadership election - and would not hold one for at least three months.

The PZPN has been playing a dangerous bluffing game with world football's governing body by ignoring an 8 April deadline for calling an election, despite warnings that Poland could be expelled from the 2000 European Championship.

Poland's sports minister, Jacek Dembski, has accused the PZPN of incompetence and corruption, and recently threatened to resign if new leaders were not elected by early August.

The PZPN missed FIFA's deadline because of what it called "procedural reasons". Its spokesman, Tomasz Jagodzinski, said: "We sent them a detailed explanation of why our board will meet on 29 April, when it will choose a date for the election. I don't think it will be sooner than three months."

FOOTBALL AROUND THE WORLD

EDITED BY RUPERT METCALF

Marian Dziurawicz, the autocratic long-time leader of the PZPN, has refused to either bring the election forward from next year, or to step down as promised.

BULGARIA

POLAND MAY not be the only country chucked out of England's Euro 2000 qualifying group. Bulgaria's Supreme Administrative Court has upheld a government decision to revoke the licence of the beleaguered Bulgarian Football Union (BFU).

The BFU has allegedly failed to act over a doping case and allowed unlicensed clubs to play in the league. The BFU president, Ivan Slavkov,

has warned that if the licence was revoked Bulgaria could be excluded from international competition.

The State Committee for youth, physical education and sports, the equivalent of a sports ministry, accused the BFU management of failing to take action in a doping case ahead of last year's World Cup finals. The midfielder Ilija Grujev, who tested positive for a banned anabolic steroid last April, was dropped from the country's World Cup squad but was not otherwise punished. The other allegation concerned Grujev's club, Neftochimik Bourgas, who apparently lack an approved professional licence.

GERMANY

JENS LEHMANN, Borussia Dortmund's German international goalkeeper, was yesterday given a three-match ban by the disciplinary commission of the German Football Federation - for pulling the hair of the Hansa Rostock midfielder Timo Lange in a Bundesliga match won 2-0 by Rostock last Saturday.

Zidane ready to leave Juventus

ZINEDINE ZIDANE is prepared to walk out on Juventus at the end of the year. The French playmaker admitted yesterday that he is not happy in Turin and wants to move to Spain.

"I want to play in Spain. I don't know when but one day I will," Zidane said. "My wife is Spanish, we have Spanish friends and I want to move there. I have never hidden my problems about the life here in Turin. I will finish this season and then see."

Zidane is under contract

with Juventus until 2004 but friends of the player say there is no way he will remain with the Italian side for another four years. Even if Juventus beat Manchester United in the semi-finals of the European Cup on Wednesday and then go on to win the title, Zidane says it will not change his mind about his future. "Juventus have shown that they can win the big matches but my wife, my family and my lifestyle count more than my job," he said.

Zidane is believed to be also

unhappy with the tactics used by the Juve new coach, Carlo Ancelotti.

Graham Souness looks likely to be another on his way at the end of the season - but his departure as Benfica coach will be against his will. Reports yesterday indicated that the former Real Madrid coach, Jupp Heynckes, will replace Souness next season.

The press and many Benfica fans have fiercely criticised Souness for what are seen as British-style tactics. After Ben-

fica lost a home game against Boavista last month, many of the 80,000 fans at the Stadium of Light waved white handkerchiefs as a sign of farewell. With seven League games left to play, Benfica are six points behind the Portuguese League leaders, Porto.

The former Benfica midfielder Jonas Thern is leaving Rangers and returning home to Sweden after failing to recover from a serious knee injury. The 32-year-old has not played this season following surgery.

England are among the eight seeded nations in this summer's 60-strong Intertoto Cup. The draw, made yesterday, offers a relatively easy passage for a major club to reach the UEFA Cup by the "back entrance".

England's top-seeded club would face the winner of a series of matches involving teams from Wales, Malta, Finland or Estonia to enter the "semi-final" round of 12 chasing the three places on offer. Aston Villa are one of several clubs to express an interest.

Cheltenham closing in on championship

JUST TWO more wins from their remaining five Nationwide Conference fixtures will secure the championship for Cheltenham Town and guarantee promotion to the Football League.

While Cheltenham were beating Kingstonian 1-0 at home on Tuesday, thanks to Neil Grayson's first-half penalty, their title rivals Rushden & Diamonds were losing 2-1 to Yeovil Town at Nene Park. Warren Patmore and Dave Piper gave the visitors a 2-0 interval

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

BY RUPERT METCALF

lead, Rushden's only reply was a late goal from Colin West.

That was a crucial victory for Yeovil, because it maintained their outside chance of snatching the title should Cheltenham suffer a collapse in form. Hayes are also fringe contenders, following their 1-0 home win over Hednesford Town on Tuesday.

earned by Lee Charles' 17th Conference goal of the season.

Kettering Town occupy second place in the table, five points behind the Robins, with only two games left to play. Hayes are in third place, behind Kettering on goal difference, and they have three remaining fixtures. Rushden are fourth, two points further adrift with four to play, while fifth-placed Yeovil are four points behind Rushden with six matches left.

Cheltenham entertain their

Gloucestershire rivals Forest Green Rovers next Tuesday and then they have another home game against Yeovil two days later. Six points will mean a party at Whaddon Road that could keep half the county awake. Two defeats, though, will mean that Yeovil, Rushden and Hayes who are at home to Cheltenham tomorrow week will begin to fancy their chances again.

In tomorrow's FA Umbro Trophy semi-final second leg at

Whaddon Road, Cheltenham meet Kingstonian for the third time in eight days. The first leg at Kingsmeadow last weekend was drawn 2-2.

The other second leg takes place on Sunday lunchtime at The Lawn, Nailsworth, where Forest Green will be hoping to make sure that at least one Gloucestershire club reaches the final on 15 May. They drew 1-1 in the first leg away to the Ryman League outfit, St Albans City, last Saturday.

Audi geared for assault on Le Mans

MOTOR RACING

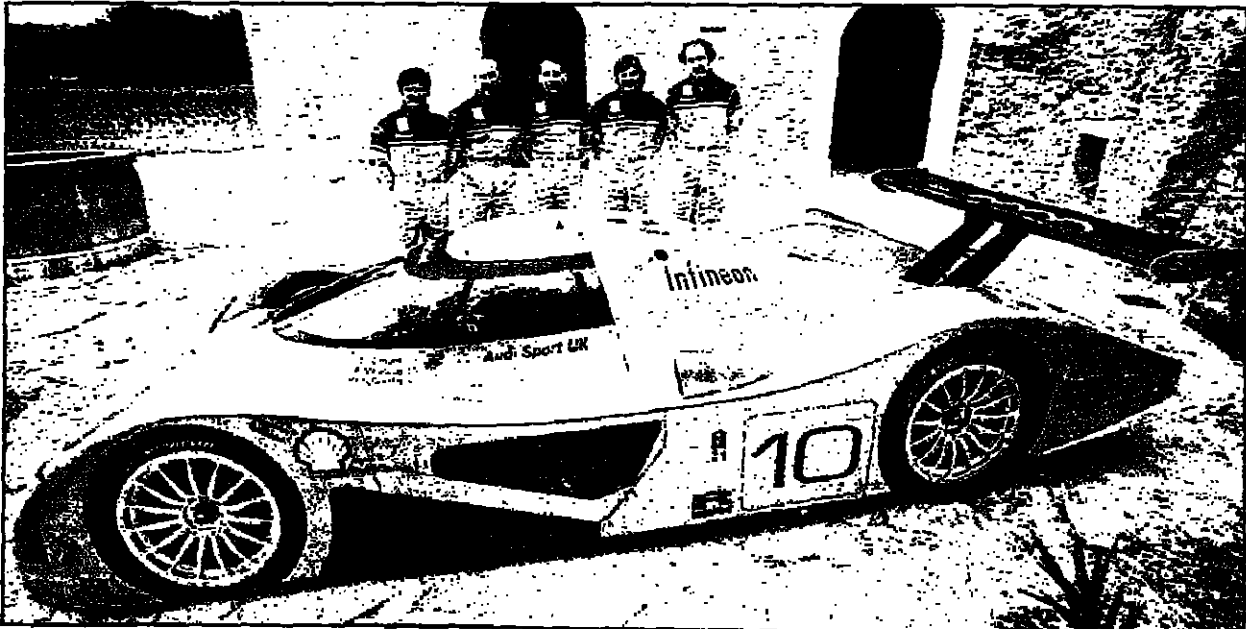
BY DERICK ALLSOP
in Le Castellet

THREE ENGLISHMEN confronted the challenge of delivering Audi a debut victory in the Le Mans 24 hour race here yesterday. Perry McCarthy, Andy Wallace and James Weaver began testing in earnest the R8C, Audi UK's monster in a sleek silver-grey shell, at Paul Ricard, the former French Grand Prix circuit.

A programme of intensive work is scheduled in preparation for the sports car classic on 12 June. Audi are taking no half-measures in this assault on Le Mans. They are entering two open-top R8R cars and two closed-top R8Cs in the hope of maximising their prospects.

The R8R, run by the hugely experienced Joest team, will have the advantage of wider tyres and fewer changes, while the R8C will be quicker.

The British squad intend to capitalise on that 220mph weapon, which they unveiled in the more sedate environment



Audi UK's Le Mans sleek silver-grey "monster", the R8C, and the team's drivers, from left, Stephane Ortelli, Perry McCarthy, Andy Wallace, Didier Theys and James Weaver, pictured before preparations for the big race

of a wine producer's chateau near here.

"We think this car will set the standard this year," said the bullish Weaver, a veteran of 11 Le Mans outings. "Generally,

you'd say an open-top car should win the race but I believe this car gives us an excellent chance."

"Le Mans gets quicker every year. It's no longer just an endurance race, it's a sprint.

You have to go flat out all the time. I'd say reliability wins it one year in eight."

Weaver, 44, is still seeking his first win at Le Mans. His best finish is a second, in 1983. Wal-

lace won the event in 1988 and feels it is time he did so again.

"The car has arrived later than we would have liked but a lot of it has been adapted from the R8R and the important

thing is to come up with the right car. We've got a lot of testing between now and the race and hopefully we'll have the reliability as well as the performance," Wallace said.

Doohan steers clear of discussing future

MOTORCYCLING

BY WYN GRIFFITHS

ago, "I've made my best start and so I need to follow that with a win in Australia," the Honda works rider said yesterday. "It's really the home round for me and I know there will be a lot of people wanting to see me win."

The former world champion Troy Corser, from Australia, is determined to make up for what he saw as a disappointing start at Kyalami when he took a second and third in the two races.

The Australian won the title at Phillip Island in 1996 and also won there in 1995. He did much of his pre-season testing on the track in Victoria but expects the surface to have worn since then and for temperatures to be considerably cooler this weekend.

Carl Fogarty, the three-times world champion from Blackburn, leads the standings with a maximum 50 points and boasted: "It was easy at Kyalami. The other riders didn't know what had hit them."

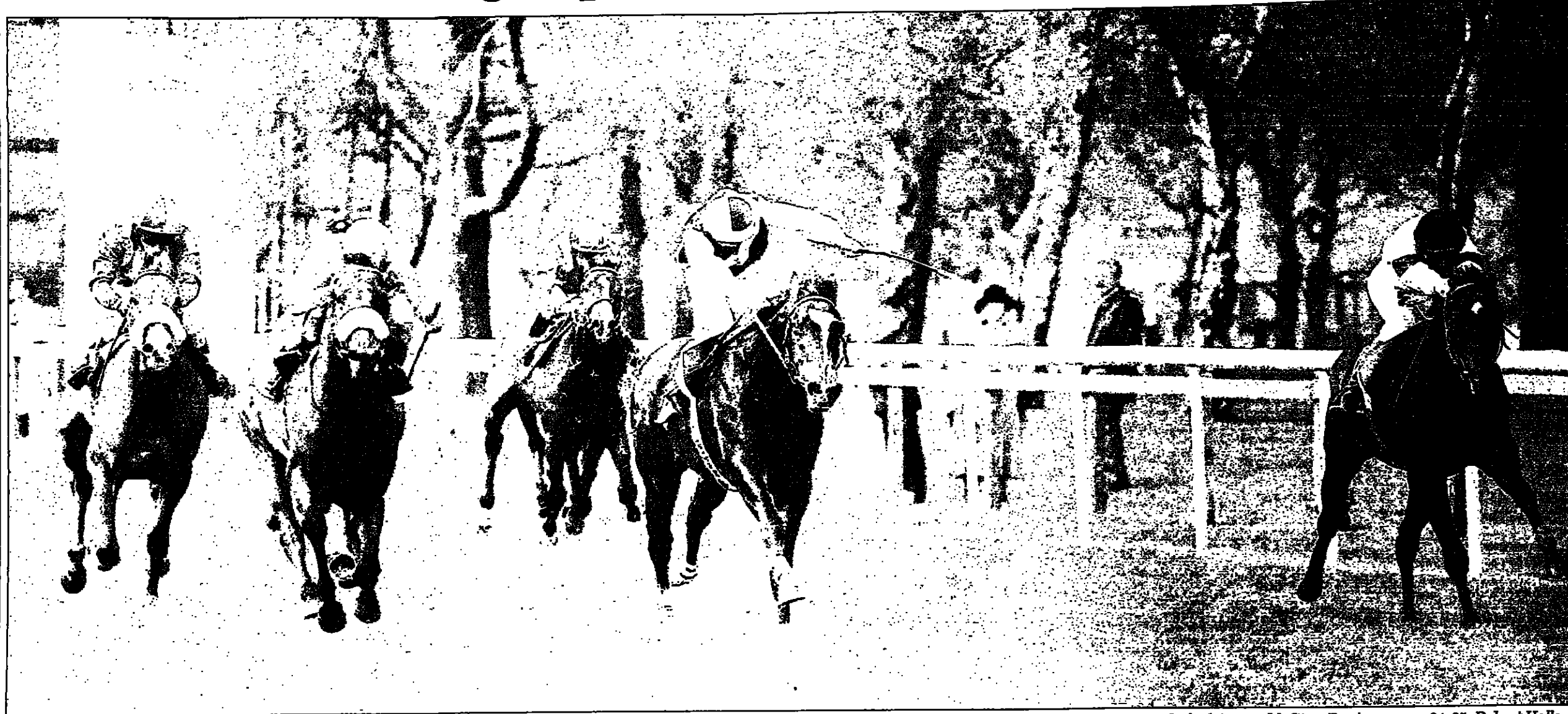
The New Zealander, Aaron Slight, is ready to step up the pace in front of what he calls his "home fans" in the World Superbikes' championship at Phillip Island track in Australia, also on Sunday.

Slight, often a runner-up in the past, came in third and second in South Africa three weeks

SPORT

THE GLORY OF GIGGS P26 SHARRON DAVIES SHOWS THE WAY P22

Dreams and betting slips discarded as Guineas favourite flops



Mujahid (blue silks, third right), the long-time favourite for the 2,000 Guineas, struggles home fifth in yesterday's Craven Stakes at Newmarket, won by Compton Admiral (second left) Racing, pages 24, 25; Robert Hallam

United wait on Giggs injury

MANCHESTER UNITED could pay a hefty price for their FA Cup victory over Arsenal on Wednesday night.

Top of the list of walking wounded are Ryan Giggs and Peter Schmeichel, who suffered an ankle strain in a challenge with Lee Dixon near the end of the gripping encounter, left Villa Park on crutches, although he should be fit for next Wednesday's European Cup semi-final second leg against Juventus in Turin.

Schmeichel, who made a series of fine saves including a penalty save from Dennis Bergkamp, suffered a groin injury and had to play on be-

FOOTBALL
BY MARK PIERSON

cause United had used up their three substitutes. The Dane is likely to sit out tomorrow's game against Sheffield Wednesday at Old Trafford in the hope of being fit to face Juventus.

To add to Ferguson's worries, Jesper Blomqvist came off complaining of a foot problem, while Phil Neville may well be pressed into action on the left wing against Wednesday tomorrow.

Henning Berg is already out with ankle ligament trouble and United will also have to do

without their captain Roy Keane against Aston Villa on 1 May after he picked up a one-match ban for his sending off on Wednesday night.

Keane is firm in his belief that United's squad will be large enough to cope.

"We've used the squad a lot this season, but you really saw it's worth against Arsenal," he said. "After extra-time on Sunday and with the other games coming up, the gaffer brought other players in and they've done brilliantly. That bit of freshness helps and there are still people who can come in."

On the plus side, Andy Cole will return from the ankle injury which left him on the

sidelines against Arsenal. Denis Irwin, who was confined to the bench on Wednesday with his knee problem, is likely to play, while Dwight Yorke is still fresh.

Ferguson will take a head count of who is available this morning, and he said yesterday: "The semi-final was about getting through no matter what because of the importance of the game. I'll now have to do a lot of thinking about my team for Saturday."

Although United's win over Arsenal was their first in two years, Keane does not think the result will have any bearing on the Premiership title race.

"I'm not into all that type of

thing just because we've won this game," he said. "We have an important game on Saturday and that's all I'm thinking about. I can't answer that question until the end of the season as to whether there's any psychological advantage or not."

"But I really don't think so - we won this game and forget everything else. It's got us through to the FA Cup final and that's all."

The Football League is set to follow rugby union's example and experiment with the 10-yard rule for offences in next year's Auto Windscreens Shield.

After a successful trial in Jersey, match officials will be

instructed to advance a free-kick by 10 yards if a player continues to show dissent, fails to retreat 10 yards, or delays the kick. The League is planning to use the new rule in next year's knock-out competition for Second and Third Division clubs.

The former World Cup referee, Pat Partridge, believes the new law could be a valuable weapon for match officials in the face of growing dissent problems on the pitch.

"Apparently, from the way the experiment has gone in Jersey, it has done tremendously well," Partridge said. "It is a positive move by the League if they go ahead with it."

"People say it is only Jersey but it had to be tested in competition. It has proved successful so let's give it a whirl."

Partridge said the new rule should have been a feature of the elite game when he was officiating.

"It is something which would have been ideal in my day as a referee," Partridge added. "It would save a lot of problems in this day and age. It is a system which has worked in rugby successfully."

It was announced yesterday that no tickets will be sold on the day for this year's Auto Windscreens Shield final, between Wigan and Millwall on Sunday.

Murali is still top of Red Rose wish list

CRICKET

LANCASHIRE WANT Muttiah Muralitharan rather than Glenn McGrath as their overseas player for 2000. The controversial Sri Lankan spinner will play a handful of games for the Old Trafford side this season after the World Cup and they want him to return for a full term next year.

The club are monitoring the McGrath situation now the Australian fast bowler has announced he is available for county cricket. Lancashire spokesman Dave Edmundson said: "Like all other counties we have been circled around McGrath, but we have not discussed him and we have not made an approach."

Durham were again frustrated by the weather as they progressed from 32 for 1 to 153 for 4 to lead Worcestershire by a single run after three miserable days at Chester-le-Street. Half-centuries by Jon Lewis and John Morris put the hosts in a dominant position but rain restricted the day's play to 38 overs.

Rival captains Wasim Akram and Mohammad Ashraffuddin find themselves under unwanted pressure as India and Pakistan prepare for the Champions Cup final in Sharjah today. While Akram has had renewed charges of match-fixing thrown at him by a former team-mate, there are growing calls for Ashraffuddin to be replaced as India's World Cup captain by Ajay Jadhava.

The former Pakistani wicketkeeper Rashid Latif accused Akram and his team of throwing Monday's match against England, saying the boys were "up to their old tricks again".

"The guys are once again making fools of the public," Latif said after Pakistan crashed to a shocking 62-run defeat, England's only success in the three-nation tournament. He added that he felt "something fishy" had started again in the team.

Akram, at the centre of an ongoing judiciary inquiry into betting and match-fixing at home, dismissed Latif's claims. "Latif is a frustrated character who cannot bear to see the Pakistani team do well," Akram said. "It seems we have to win every game we play to keep the allegations at bay. As a captain, I know my team is honest and above board."

More reports, scoreboard, page 25

Pinto on the defensive over drug allegations

ATHLETICS

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

ANTONIO PINTO, Portugal's European 10,000 metres champion, yesterday answered allegations of doping abuse levelled at him by Britain's top distance runner, Jon Brown. Speaking during the build-up for Sunday's London Marathon, which both men will race, Pinto dismissed Brown's claim, made after his European victory in Budapest, that he had illegally enhanced his performance by taking the blood booster Erythropoietin (EPO).

Pinto, who set new personal bests for 1,500, 5,000 and 10,000m last year at the age of 32, as well as finishing third in the London Marathon, said that he had beaten Brown "fair and square" in Budapest.

"Two weeks later, he beat me fair and square in Brussels, when he set a British 10,000m record. Do I need to say anything else?"

"I have been running for more than 15 years. When I was 20 I reached the final at the Seoul Olympics, and I have performed at every major championship since. Jon Brown - I only heard of him two years ago."

Brown has repeatedly voiced his opinion over the last year that many performances in distance running have been achieved through the illegal use of EPO.

After the European Championship trials in Birmingham last summer, he pointed an accusing finger at European nations with a traditional in-

volvement in professional cycling, alleging that doctors assisted those in both sports to manipulate their performances illegally. He has since described marathon running as being "saturated with drugs".

Brown's outspoken comments are made against a background of steeply improving performances in international marathons. Eleven runners recorded times faster than 2hr 08min in 1998, and eight the year before. In the eight previous years that feat was achieved just five times.

Whether this improvement is down to improved funding, rising prize-money or illegal activity is a point that is likely to be debated long and hard. Brown, clearly, believes the answer is a simple one - EPO, which provides extra red blood cells to improve oxygen capacity and endurance, some-

thing clearly beneficial to performers in endurance sports.

Pinto himself was embroiled in controversy last year when comments were ascribed to him in which he cast doubt on the legality of training methods used by Spanish distance runners. He said that he had been misquoted.

Pinto's manager, Luis Felipe Posso, who acts for other leading marathon runners such as the Brazilian world record-holder Ronaldo Da Costa, three-times London winner Dionicio Ceron and Olympic champion Josia Thugwane, added his own views in Pinto's defence. "By Brown's argument, if Pinto used EPO to beat him in Budapest, then what did Brown use to improve so much two weeks later?"

"I honestly believe Brown is capable of running 2:07 for the marathon on Sunday. But to do that he will have to focus and believe in himself instead of concentrating on other runners in the field."

Asked if he shared Brown's

view that EPO was as big a factor in marathon running today as it has been in professional cycling, Pinto replied: "I have no idea. Until someone is caught and an offence is proven you cannot say. Let Jon Brown say what he wants. Until I know I cannot comment."

Pinto is strongly in favour of introducing blood testing into the sport. "I think it would be great," he said, "because it would put everyone on the same level. In cycling they are already doing it. I hope all sports will eventually do the same."

Alan Storey, general manager of the London Marathon, believes that blood testing cannot be introduced without the active support of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, particularly over the question of setting medical parameters.

"Most people in the sport would like to see all the changes necessary to make sure everyone is competing on a level playing field," Storey said. "But even if we could take blood samples, we would still need to employ medical expertise to decide what those samples meant and what the levels should be. It would not be a cheap operation and it is simply beyond the capabilities of a set of marathon organisers."

"This is something that has to be initiated by the IAAF, although they may be encouraged privately and publicly by national federations."



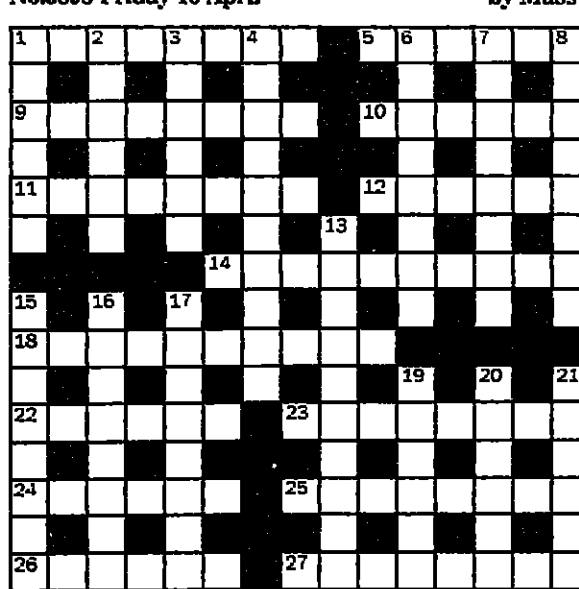
Antonio Pinto (left) and Jon Brown Allsport/Emipics

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No.3898 Friday 16 April

by Mass

Thursday's solution



ACROSS
1 Apparently BA's defensive position? (4,3)
5 Pouch on Border chieftain (6)
9 Dessert supplied to roomer in guest-house (8)
10 Wretched, docked, the Spanish horse (6)
11 Kick-start in rally (8)
12 Brood about crack - and desist (4,2)
14 Clown's large heavy footwear (10)
18 Dangers at sea, violent rolls whip about stern of Argo (10)
22 Alien, one with intelligence, drifting around in cold (6)
23 Calling for a change. Hants - so I bowl over (8)

DOWN
24 Call in friends providing bottles (6)
25 Drainage system needs repair before Eastern storm (8)
26 Note on classical quartet (6)
27 Deserted on the beach (8)

8 Service includes cereal, it's said, on first-class railway (8)
13 Minor rise is without benefit (10)
15 Knows Pat's about to become a showman? (8)
16 Flag-waver presents beam, loaded with gin cocktail (8)
17 Set of boats, all bad, in a state (8)
19 Source of drink for chap? Time's up (6)
20 Blue bird fluttering round a lake (6)
21 Line's cast out from bulwark (6)

صكرا من الارامل

THE INDEPENDENT

16 April 1999

FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • PLUS THE INFORMATION DAILY



The team that vanished

In the towns and villages of rural Wales, a stranger stands out like, well, a French-speaking West African rugby player in a Day-Glo tracksuit. So how did 12 players from the Ivory Coast melt into the mists of the Black Mountains?

At the Pets in Need charity shop in Llandovery high street, a couple of homemade posters have been Blu-Tacked to the window. Both are forlorn appeals for the public's help. "Jack Russell terrier called Bron lost at Myddfa. Children grieving. £100 reward," reads one. The other, scrawled in fading green marker pen, seeks the return of a mislaid teddy bear: "Grubby grey towelling. Four inches tall. Wearing a black-and-white bow-tie."

But dogs and cuddly toys are not the only things to have mysteriously gone AWOL in Llandovery of late. Last week, the small south Wales town misplaced 12 members of the Ivory Coast rugby team who were taking part in the under-19 world championships. Due to board a flight home from Gatwick to Abidjan last Thursday, half the squad decided to extend their Welsh sojourn indefinitely, vanishing from the local college which served as their base. The Home Office issued a statement saying all 12 had overstayed their visas and could now be arrested and deported.

But that was a week ago, and despite a few close calls, the authorities remain one step behind. On Saturday, a sharp-eyed motorist spotted two black men hitch-hiking along a road near Lustleigh in Devon. In their identical tracksuits with "Ivory Coast" emblazoned on the top, they seemed to fit the description of the suspects. But by the time the police flooded the area with officers, the men had disappeared. Today, the Dyfed Dozen are still very much at large.

Not that you'd know Llandovery was the nerve-centre of a massive immigration operation when you first arrive at the sleepy backwater which stands at the foot of the Black Mountains. There are no choppers circling the River Towy. There are no snarling tracker dogs clutched in tracksuits between their drooping fangs. Not even a police chief in mirrored sunglasses barking orders. On a wet weekday lunchtime, the only people on the streets are morose schoolboys hanging round the telephone boxes and a pair of walkers in cagoules who are cheerfully photographing the cenotaph.

In theory, a dozen muscular, French-speaking 18-year-old Africans in electric-blue sportswear should not be too hard to track down in a town with no black residents. But down at the

pebble-dashed police station, Sergeant Huw Jenkins admits the Dyfed-Powys force has yet to make any real breakthrough.

"We haven't conducted any house-to-house searches, but we have circulated all the relevant details to surrounding forces," says Sergeant Jenkins, breaking off from brewing a pot of tea. "I was very surprised when they just disappeared but there's not a lot we can do really. I can't imagine they're still in Llandovery. If they were, we'd certainly have apprehended them by now. They'd stand out like a sore thumb round here."

His self-belief is slightly undermined by a bar chart on the wall behind him which shows the station's crime detection figures to be a modest 56.7 per cent. Perhaps the Dyfed-Powys force should have apprehended the danger signs. Last year, four members of an Ivory Coast rugby team absconded when they were playing a tournament in France and have yet to be found.

In the 40 years since it gained its independence from France, the Ivory Coast has been the most stable country in West Africa. Unlike

700,000 refugees who have crossed the border to flee civil war in Liberia.

So great is the impulse to escape the poverty and corruption that over the past few years, thousands have stowed away on ships out of the port of Abidjan. In 1997, four Ivorians suffocated or starved after hiding away on cargo vessels bound for the UK; last year, a Danish captain admitted manning a teenage stowaway and throwing him overboard to certain death (the captain was imprisoned for 10 months for maltreatment). For those who do make it to Europe, the chances of asylum are slight and Interpol suspect that organised networks of friends and relatives keep them from being discovered.

In Llandovery's wind-lashed streets, there is no shortage of amateur detectives willing to share their theories about the team's whereabouts. Most favour the official view that the Africans have forsaken the town for the metropolitan anonymity of London or Merthyr Tydfil. But others prefer to think they've fallen for the charms of the Brecon Beacons.

"They were lovely, lovely lads," says Pamela

the distinct impression he was trying to raise some money. Bongo drums aren't really our thing here, so I told him to try the craft centre across the road."

Slowly, the puzzle is being pieced together. While some of the team have hot-footed it to Devon, others have obviously gone to ground nearby, disguised in Welsh national dress and with just enough local currency to keep going until the search eases off. But where would they lie low? No clues can be gleaned from the surly shop assistant in the local Costcutters store who claims not to have noticed any furtive bulk buying. The Mayflower Chinese takeaway reports no suspiciously large deliveries to remote barns.

At the Erwion Caravan Park on the edge of town, the wizened proprietor, Cyril Rees, hasn't rented any more caravans than usual for the time of year. "Saw them play rugby at the stadium, I did. Very good, too, but they haven't been here, son," he says, scratching his head in recollection. "We did have some black people last year, though. Can't remember where they were from, but it must have been very far away because they were really black. If you're looking for the rugby boys, you could try the cave, though. That would be a smashing place to hide out."

The cave. But of course. Along with the Hamster Museum's collection of prize-winning rodents, Twm Sion Cati's Cave is renowned as Llandovery's premier attraction. A quick flick through the tourist brochure - "the cave hideout of outlaw leader Twm Sion Cati, Wales's 16th-century Robin Hood" - confirms its position as the ideal bolt-hole for bandits, hermits and other misanthropes.

Yet half an hour spent rooting round the gloomy cavern fails to unearth any clues. There are no studded boot prints or discarded jock straps on the muddy floor. The air hangs heavy with the pungent odour of damp bracken. Night is falling. It is time to concede defeat. The trail has gone stone cold.

Surprisingly, the players' continued evasion is greeted with some pride back at The Greyhound, the local rugby pub. "They're just down the coast from Rwanda, aren't they?" suggests one of the locals, keeping an eye on Sky Sports. "It can't be too easy for them over there. You can't blame them for wanting a better life. They were a nice bunch of blokes. Enjoyed a few drinks with us - nothing too rowdy. Good luck to them."

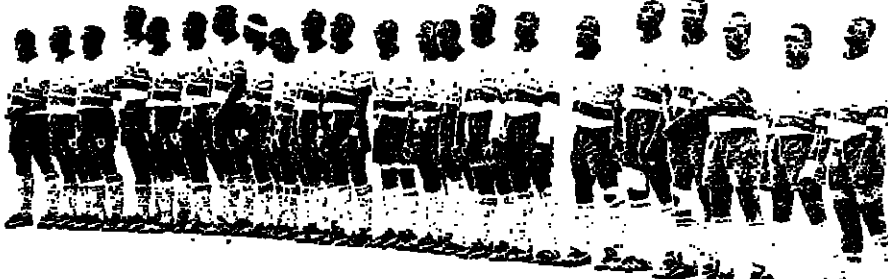
BY RICHARD MCCLURE

its neighbours Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia, it has never suffered a military coup, military rule or civil war. Even so, beneath the mask of democracy a sense of helplessness prevails, particularly among the numerous unemployed young men - 60 per cent are out of work - and many have turned to drugs and alcohol to pass their time.

According to Unicef, 140,000 children now live in the streets, while a recent study by the World Bank reports that 60 per cent of Ivorians live in poverty without any hope of improving their lot. The economy, which carries a debt of \$19bn, has been placed under further pressure from the

Wheat, warming herself in front of an electric fire at her charity shop. "Very polite, well-behaved fellows they were. Put our rugby lads to shame. They came in here quite a few times looking at shoes and shirts. They even bought some old Welsh bonnets - they kept on saying 'chapeaux, chapeaux'. If you ask me, they've loved being in Wales so much that they just wanted to stay on for a holiday."

Over at the Heritage centre, tourist officer Joan Snaith pauses from her paperwork to confide a piece of evidence: "The day they disappeared, one of them came in here with a bongo drum he was trying to sell," she whispers. "I got



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IND14/04/99

Monsanto sues

Sir: Dan Verakis of Monsanto claims that, with regard to Monsanto's test sites in Britain, "only people who break the law will face action" (letter, 15 April).

This is far from being the case; no criminal prosecution has ever been taken against myself and four other women who removed GM plants from a Monsanto site last July. Rather than the lawfulness of our act of digging being considered by a jury, the legal action which we and other Genetix Snowball supporters are facing is in the form of a civil action for an injunction from Monsanto.

This lawsuit has been described as a "Slapp" - a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation. Slapps, commonly used by corporations in the USA, are an attempt to silence protesters and potential protesters by suing them for defamation, injury or conspiracy, thus presenting citizens with a "price" for speaking out politically.

For a corporation which can afford to pursue injunctions this is a strategy which they believe to be more effective at silencing opponents than taking them to court and trying the lawfulness of the actual actions.

MELANIE JARMAN
Genetix Snowball
Manchester

Sir: I am touched by Monsanto's bigheartedness (letter, 15 April) in carrying out their "duty" to ensure that everyone who receives the Genetix Snowball handbook receives a copy of any relevant court order. How kind - we can have delivered to us, in our own homes, our very own injunction telling us that we may be sent to prison for up to two years for even setting foot on Monsanto's property.

And yet there is part of me which suspects that Monsanto's motives are not entirely altruistic. Monsanto has a long history of using strongarm legal tactics, and Genetix Snowball is simply the latest target.

The truth is that Monsanto is running scared from the massive opposition in Europe to their genetically modified products. They expected us to roll over, as the Americans did, and we refused to do so.

By the way, I've got a Genetix Snowball handbook, and very interesting it is too.
ANDREA NEEDHAM
London E2

A Serb baffled

Sir: In reply to Anthony Arblaster (letter, 10 April), my partner is Serbian, and she abhors Milosevic and all his works and is appalled by the plight of the Kosovan refugees.

However, she is also appalled by the demonising of all Serbs, as if each Serb was a Milosevic clone. She is distressed by the bombing of her own country, which has predictably driven even opponents of Milosevic to support him. She is incredulous that Nato thought that bombing (preceded by the withdrawal of OSCE observers) would prompt extreme nationalists to shout, "I give up!" rather than accelerate their ethnic cleansing. She is baffled by the West's support for the KLA, a terrorist organisation which has killed many Serb civilians.

And she is disgusted by critics who forget the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Serbs from the Krajina region of Croatia. (Her aunt died on that trek). Apparently ethnic cleansing is morally OK and invisible to the media if it is carried out by a friendly state, but wicked when it is carried out by an enemy.

I endorse every one of these points.
DAVID WELLS
Beckenham, Kent

Sir: Graham Perkins states that the Croats "fought a brilliant six-day campaign to retake the occupied lands of the Krajina" (letter, 14 April). Would he describe the ethnic Albanians as

"occupying" Kosovo? The Croats ethnically cleansed Krajina of about 200,000 Serbs whilst US aircraft bombed Serb air defences. There was no outcry for air strikes against Tudjman's fascist campaign.

The reason Serbs were fighting in the first place was because Croatia insisted Krajina become part of an "independent" Croatia using the borders created by Pavelic and Hitler in 1941. If Mr Perkins researches the history of that era he may come to realise why no Serb wants to live in a fascist Croatia ever again.
HUGH W GLEAVES
London N10

Sir: Is the British government creeping towards a ground war in Kosovo? In this year falls the hundredth anniversary of the commencement of the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa. The cause of that war was different but is the effect the same?

At the end of the last century Britain, the superpower of the day, thought it could win a quick war against the Boer republics. In fact it took 250,000 troops, marshalling resources from across the Empire and three long years to subdue (not defeat) a rag-tag army of 20,000 farmers. But the real tragedy was that it also took the lives of an estimated 20,000 Boer women and children and the deliberate destruction of property, farms and homes.
FRANCIS HAY
Banstead, Surrey

Sir: Mr Milosevic has achieved his aim of ethnic cleansing. Let us accept it and stop the bombing. The money wasted on fighting the war would be better invested in a "Marshall plan" for Albania.
MRS UTE LANG
Longfield, Kent

Sir: Many things must be held to be disputable. One thing, however, is not, and that is that contamination of the land by long-term radioactive materials is wholly unacceptable. Any use of

such materials ought to be treated as a war crime. Nato should publicly pledge and substantiate that depleted uranium has not been and will not be employed in munitions.
MIKE TOPE
West Molesey, Surrey

Sir: In answer to David Aaronovitch ("Why do these decent folk find it so difficult to support the war?", 1 April): Let's bomb Israel for the Palestinians, let's bomb China for the Taiwanese, let's bomb North Korea for the South Koreans... we did. Let's bomb Indonesia for the trade unionists and others, let's bomb Chile for the Santiago stadium affair, let's bomb Argentina for the disappeared, let's bomb Turkey for the Kurds, etcetera. Let's just use all the bombs we have and bomb everyone. After all, are we not all guilty?

KEVIN STEWART
London W11

Sir: Steven Norris says truckers are right to protest over rises in excise duty and fuel tax (Right of Reply, 15 April). A report by the Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme indicates that only 30 per cent of commercial fleet managers know how much they spend on fuel. Only 10 per cent of drivers have been trained in fuel-efficient driving, and fewer than 30 per cent use improved maintenance to reduce consumption. Instead of causing havoc for road users, hauliers should look at efficiency within their own operations and help to save the environment and save themselves money.
SEB BELLOE
Sustainability
London W8

Sir: Betty Perry thinks it is "acceptable to make some charge for an education which

Threats to Turkey

Sir: Your leading article "If Turkey is to join the EU it must stop abusing the Kurds" (12 April) is an embodiment of double standards.

You urge the Western powers to give an ultimatum to Turkey to "treat its Kurdish minority decently", and you associate that minority with the PKK, one of the most blood-thirsty terrorist organisations in the world. This is tantamount to associating the Catholic minority in Ulster with the "Real IRA". You also add the threat that, if Turkey does not abide by this "ultimatum", it should not be considered for EU membership.

Undoubtedly Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin, as, indeed, other citizens, deserve to have all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all citizens, under normal circumstances. But there is an emergency in Turkey, where a ruthless, sanguinary and secessionist organisation is striving to dismember the country.

Turkey is merely doing its utmost to preserve its integrity, security and independence, which any sovereign state has a right to do.

I am hopeful that the general election in Turkey on 18 April will result in the accession to power of a strong and benevolent government that will tackle all the problems of its Kurdish citizens, within the boundaries of Turkey. However, threatening Turkey with ultimatums and threats of forfeiture of EU membership is counter-productive and may lead to the West's losing a good ally.

Besides, in view of the recent treatment accorded to Turkey by the EU, that organisation has lost all influence that it might have had over that state.
Professor S R SONYEL
London W1

Non-aligned

Sir: It was startling - and indeed entertaining - to see myself characterised by you as a member

of the hated boss class over the non-renewal of comedian Mark Steel's contract at *The Guardian* (Media, 13 April). I'm afraid some of your facts are wrong, however.

I did not offer Mark another six-month contract "as long as he never wrote for *The Independent* again". The truth is the opposite: I actually gave him explicit permission at the time to write what he told us would be a sports column for *The Independent*. (Whatever happened to that column for you?)

Nor did I tell him *The Guardian* was planning to realign itself politically alongside Blair. That would be silly.

You omitted to say that the demonstration at *The Guardian* on Monday appeared in fact to be organised by the Socialist Workers Party. We are not planning to align ourselves politically with them, either.

DAVID LEIGH
Comment Editor
The Guardian
London EC1

Call to oblivion

Sir: No doubt there are arguments against our joining European monetary union, but surely there must be stronger ones than John Barnett's claim that we would do better to emulate Norway and its "more dynamic" economy (letter, 14 April).

More dynamic than Germany, Italy, France or Spain? So where are all these Norwegian cars, aircraft, agricultural products, clothing, cultural artefacts? In all my 60-odd years of life I don't remember ever buying anything from Norway, or coming across anything at all, except Ibsen.

So far as I am concerned, emulation of Norway, however dynamic, would mean economic oblivion, or at best irrelevance. This is not going to convince me, or anyone else, that we must keep out of Euroland.
RON SONNET
Southsea, Hampshire

Age of consent

Sir: Your correspondents, arguing in favour of lowering the age of consent for male homosexuals, seem to assume that the purpose of age of consent laws is to define that age at which one receives the privilege of being able to have sexual intercourse (letters, 15 April).

On the contrary, their purpose is to define the age up to which children are entitled to receive protection from seduction by adults. On this basis one could just as well argue that the laws discriminate against teenage girls because the period of protection granted to them is shorter.

Any arbitrary cut-off chosen, whether 16 or 18, has to balance opposing evils: restriction of freedom on the one hand and failure to protect on the other. It seems perfectly reasonable in setting such limits to take account of emotional and physical maturity and, therefore, there is nothing necessarily illogical or "unfair" in allowing that the period for which boys should be protected from seduction by homosexual males should be longer than that offered to protect females from being seduced by heterosexual males.

What this additional period should be would be better addressed by a rational consideration of the statistics regarding onset of puberty than emotive appeals in the name of an irrelevant "equality".
Professor STEPHEN SENN
Departments of Epidemiology and Public Health and Statistical Science
University College London

Teachers' pay

Sir: I have followed the series of letters and articles in your paper on performance-related pay for teachers with a mixture of dismay and resignation. Why has nobody raised the simplest issue of all? To cross the threshold teachers have to commit themselves to three weeks of extra work in the year.

My wonderful staff, working in almost ideal conditions with small classes of eager, well-disciplined children and high levels of professional support in the classroom, are not putting themselves forward. Why? Because they are all fully committed already, they are all exhausted by the end of term, and of course, they are all women!

They care deeply about their performance and their responsibilities and they agonise about their career prospects. But they won't apply, and it causes me real anger to see this kind of unfair exploitative pressure continuing under a government which should know better, uncritically supported by a paper which should be campaigning for this particular gender issue to be dropped.

JOHN PEASNALL
Head (and only man)
Rauceby School
Lincolnshire

Fishing for votes

Sir: I could not, at first, believe my eyes. I gazed on the picture of William Hague not only eating a plate of fish and chips but sprinkling brown vinegar on it (13 April).

We used to see Harold Wilson doing things like this. He was wooing the unions and it was part of the beer-and-sandwiches-at-No 10 culture. But this is a Tory leader! He needs some new spin doctors.

The idea of Harold Macmillan eating fish and chips is quite inconceivable. Of present-day Tories, Michael Portillo might do it, but he would not let the media see. John Redwood never. I can see him eating wild locusts and honey, but not fish and chips.

This is the sort of PR campaign the Tories are going to mount in the forthcoming elections, their vote will shrink to a hard core of backwoodsmen.
SIDNEY VINES
Salisbury

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Billingsgate No 5: a porter takes time out after barrowing fish from the refrigerated vans to the stall-holders

Kalpesh Lathigra

IN BRIEF

enables higher income earning" (letter, 8 April). Not all university courses give access to well-paid jobs. What of those who study music, fine art or theology? Certainly those who enjoy high incomes as a direct result of their education should contribute something in return - and they already do through paying higher taxes.
JUSTIN BRETT
Gibson, Monmouthshire

Sir: I commend David Aaronovitch for his thoughtful and balanced article (Comment, 15 April) and thank him for the support for me personally that he expressed in it. I would like to take this opportunity to state that, contrary to what might be inferred from a quotation in his

piece, I am not in any way associated with the Orange Order, particularly not its Portland Lodge.
NICK MARTIN-CLARK
London N17

Sir: In sentencing Dr Jack Kevorkian, the euthanasia practitioner, to a lengthy term of imprisonment, the judge has made it known that, in certain parts of the US, lethal injection is the privilege of the state.
NIGEL BALDWIN
Portsmouth

Sir: Sainsbury's reward card manager says loyalty cards help understanding of shoppers' preferences and tailoring of products (Right of Reply, 14 April). If you can only find J S baby carrots on the shelf how does she know you would prefer another kind?
JIM SMITH
Hythe, Kent

A short story about obsession, revenge and beer mats

PEOPLE OFTEN complain to me that novels are far too long these days. Not today they aren't! Here, for your reading comfort, is a COMPLETE modern novel called *The Beer Mat Lover* which is less than 1,000 words long.

"SOONER OR later you're going to have to make up your mind which one you like better - is it your wonderful collection of beer mats or is it me?"

That was the question that my wife fired at me one day about two years ago. People talk about men popping the question before they get married, but they never talk about the question that women pop after marriage has taken place, and that is the question. All men will recognise it. It is the wife gradually realising that there is something

else in a man's life apart from her and deciding to challenge it.

In your case it may be sports cars or antique guns. In my case, it's beer mats. All right, call it a silly hobby if you like, but it's no worse than collecting toy cars or theatre programmes, which plenty of grown-ups do. I once saw Dr Roy Strong, director of the Victoria and Albert as he then was, talking about the museum's collection of 18th-century watches on TV, and I remember thinking to myself - OK, it's old watches with you, mate, with me it's beer mats. But what's the big difference when it comes down to it?

In any case, beer mats teach you a lot, about geography, and about advertising, and about... well, about the different ways in which people mop up beer stains in dif-

ferent countries. All right then, beer mats don't teach you anything, but George VI collected postage stamps and what did that ever teach him? I rest my case. In my case, my wife chose a startling strategy - she decided to pretend that I really had changed and had really got rid of my beer mats. She then moved on to the task of turning me into a new man.

"What you've got to do now is get in touch with your own feelings," she would say.

One day I had nothing better to do, so I did get in touch with my own feelings. It was a revelation. I had five main feelings: fear, insecurity, jealousy, love of beer mats and revenge. I thought I would deal with the feelings of revenge first, as they sounded more fun.

"I've been in touch with my



MILES KINGSTON

One day I had nothing better to do so I got in touch with my feelings. It was a revelation

feelings," I told her. "So what do I do now?"

"Examine them honestly and

deal with them openly," she said.

I examined my feelings of revenge and found that they centred mostly on a boy called Johnson who had bullied me at school. In the years when I was getting married and having children and collecting beer mats I hadn't thought about him much, but every now and then his image would float in front of me and I would feel rage and impotent fury well up, and I would have to breathe deeply till it went away. My first wife got to know the symptoms well. Whenever I started breathing audibly she would say: "Stop thinking about Johnson."

"I can't help it," I would say. "Now that I'm big enough to hit him back, I really want to do it."

"He's probably rich and powerful by now and got a minder to stop you doing it, so don't bother."

That was the difference between my first wife and the second. My first wife told me to forget about Johnson. My second wife told me to examine my feelings of revenge and do something about them. That meant, search out Johnson and punch him. Of course, she didn't know she was encouraging me to do exactly that, but I felt sure she was right.

By an extraordinary coincidence, I bumped into an old school friend who still kept in touch with Johnson and told me where he was. While the heat of revenge was still on me, I went round to Johnson's office and demanded to see him.

"Yes?" said Johnson, looking up at me as I entered his office. He had gone grey and looked a little frail. I reckoned I could clear his desk and start punching him within

five seconds. I just needed to taunt him a bit first.

"Remember me?" I said.

"No," said Johnson. While wondering what to say next, my eye fell on his desk. I couldn't believe it. There was a beer mat lying there.

"My God!" I said. "You've got one of the early Thomson & Wootton Kent Brewery beer mats! I've never seen one in the flesh before!"

"I collect them a bit," said Johnson. "Are you interested?" The upshot was that instead of punching him, I asked him home to dinner to look at my collection. He and my wife got on very well. In fact, they are now living together somewhere near Amersham in Berkshire. She probably thinks she can make something of him. But once a bully, always a bully, I say.

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Aerial war demands a readiness to admit mistakes

AN AERIAL bombardment is a peculiar kind of conflict, fought as much on the television screen as in the theatre of war. The tragic, inadvertent bombing of a column of Kosovo Albanian refugees, therefore, is likely to have more impact on public support for the war than it would if British troops were committed on the ground.

As Tony Blair discovered in the bombing of Iraq, public support for firm action against tyrants may be wide, but it is not deep. There is a one-sidedness about Western technological superiority which requires force from the air to be deployed with utmost restraint: people are liable to become justifiably squeamish about television images of cities under a hail of missiles and of the "collateral" damage afterwards.

If British soldiers were fighting their way through the hills of Kosovo, with their uncanny resemblance to the British countryside, the attitude back home to casualties sustained by civilians in crossfire would be very different. But a just war from the air has to be fought so much more justly than one on the ground.

It was, therefore, unwise of the Pentagon to assert so quickly, and without any evidence, that the killing of the refugees was the work of the Serb armed forces. The correct posture would have been one of sorrow and a willingness to investigate. It is vitally important in fighting a limited war to avoid the gung-ho mentality which assumes that "our boys are always right".

The wider lesson of the tragedy on the road from Prizren to Djakovica is that it further underscores the difficulties inherent in trying from the air to eject an army of occupation. All the Serb tanks and soldiers in Kosovo cannot be identified and attacked from 16,000 feet, so the objective has to be to make life as intolerable for them as possible - while avoiding the deaths of significant numbers of civilians. It may be possible to "degrade the Serb killing machine" sufficiently from the air so that Slobodan Milosevic feels bound to pull out. But it will not be easy or quick and, if further tragic accidents are to be avoided, it will be harder and longer.

However, it may not be possible at all, in which case Nato troops will have to be sent in on the ground. It is understandable that ground forces have not been deployed so far - as a Nato spokesman said this week, even if they had been available, they would not have been sent in yet. But the fact that Nato leaders are holding back from arming the Kosovo Liberation Army, or from preparing for a ground invasion - or from preparing to do either - is increasingly puzzling.

A ground war may turn out not to be necessary, but it should not be ruled out, and it would make more sense to make Milosevic realise that the threat is real.



CLOUD COVER

A strange procedure - but justice was done

WE ARE, as Amnesty International declared yesterday, "one major step closer to justice", with the Home Secretary's decision to allow extradition proceedings against General Pinochet to go ahead. One more "major step" closer to justice than is strictly necessary, in fact.

Jack Straw is, rightly, playing the part of Desk Sergeant Sticker to the hilt. This is one case that has to be done by the book, even if it does require Mr Straw to assert with a straight face that he is "satisfied that he took this decision with an open mind" and "has considered the matter entirely afresh". Just as American juries are told to disregard inadmissible evidence, Mr Straw told himself to ignore the fact that he had already given the go-ahead for extradition after the first, flawed ruling by the Law Lords.

All of which neatly illustrates the absurdity of ministers acting in a "quasi-judicial capacity". In this case in particular, there is nothing "quasi" about it. Extradition is an entirely judicial business, and the idea that politicians should be involved as a matter of procedure is long out of date.

That, however, is for another day. For now, it is enough that the new international law to bring torturers to justice is being followed in a manner that is safe from legal challenge. What matters is that if Mr Straw had been acting purely as a politician, he would have reached the same judgement. It is right that Pinochet should go to Spain to face trial, and the Conservatives who have popped up to say that the Chileans should deal with him are wrong.

The idea that a trial in Chile would help the process of national reconciliation on which the country is embarked in its post-Pinochet phase is unconvincing. Far better for him to be tried in Spain: then the pro-Pinochet half of Chile can blame the Spanish, while the anti-Pinochet half can give thanks that the old tyrant has finally been brought to book.

The law and Ms Jones

IT IS a pity - although perhaps not for Fiona Jones, the MP - that there is not going to be a by-election in Newark. It promised an intriguing contest. With William Hague seemingly going nowhere and the Liberal Democrats starting a poor third, how would Newark's voters send the traditional message of insubordination to the Government? How would the pro-euro Tories fare? We shall never find out, because the Appeal Court has ruled that Ms Jones is not guilty of fraud in recording her electoral expenses.

The point on which she got off, however, merely confirms the need for reform of the law on election funding. The jury, it was held, had been misdirected on the distinction between spending to promote Ms Jones as an individual candidate and spending to promote the Labour Party. By the time of the next general election, the rules to regulate spending must catch up with the 20th century, if not the 21st.

Not their natural stance, but Straw and Byers are doing the right thing

SO GENERAL Pinochet will not be on the next plane out to Chile, and Rupert Murdoch is not to be Manchester United's next owner.

When these two stories broke in the early autumn only the most reckless of gamblers would have put money on this cautious Labour Government taking the progressives' line in both cases. When Murdoch waved his millions in the direction of Old Trafford most informed opinion assumed that the club would be his. Similarly, ever since Pinochet began his pampered incarceration in Britain, acres of print have confidently predicted an early return to his country.

Both cases have been uniquely awkward for the Government, as they demanded clear-cut decisions within a tight timescale that threatened to alienate influential parts of the still-broad New Labour coalition.

This is not the way Blairites like to do business. Awkward coalition-busting decisions are either postponed - the single currency, electoral reform, transport policies that might hit those poor old middle-England car-owners - or modified in such a way as to keep both sides almost happy.

The right to roam? Give the ramblers a statutory right, but appoint a leading opponent as chair of the Countryside Agency. The minimum wage? Introduce the measure, but at a low enough rate to keep the CBI, previously a fierce opponent, on board.

On Pinochet and Murdoch on the other hand there was no third way. Nor could ministers rule that both would be best dealt with once the next general election was safely out of the way.

The decisions illustrate that even the newest of New Labour ministers, Jack Straw and Stephen Byers, can dance to the progressives' beat. When the chips are down, they are utterly different beasts to the Conservatives who preceded them. A Tory home secretary would have sent Pinochet packing long ago, while under a Conservative government Murdoch would already be looking forward to his first FA cup final as the authorised new owner of the club.

Even so, neither decision can be taken as a sign that the Government's consensual Third Way is about to be replaced. The Government on both occasions made the politically safest decisions, which happened also to be the more progressive. For both Straw and Byers would have risked far greater uproar by going the other way.

On Pinochet the instinctive reaction of New Labour was on show from the beginning. Peter Mandelson showed unguarded delight at the dictator's arrest, in a BBC interview the day after. Straw himself had led student demonstrations against his most prominent prisoner in the Sixties. Even so, if the fate of the General had been entirely in the hands of this Government he might have been sent home.

America made clear its disapproval of the extradition. The Sun strongly opposed it, as did other influential right-wing papers.

If ministers had been forced to stick their heads above the parapet and take on their powerful allies in the United States and The Sun without any outside ammunition, the out-



STEVE RICHARDS
Murdoch does not blame the Government for his failure to become the owner of Manchester United

come might well have been different. But the Law Lords provided the ammunition to reinforce ministerial instinct. Admittedly the Law Lords handed Straw much less ammunition in their second judgment, by sharply narrowing the scope of torture-related crimes for which the dictator could be charged. But Spain has supplied evidence of many more torture cases which had been allegedly committed after the new cut-off date of 1988.

The principle behind Straw's original decision to extradite was not challenged by the Law Lords' revised judgment.

Straw would have become embroiled in a huge political row had he reversed his earlier decision, even if he had attracted the fleeting congratulations of The Sun and Lady Thatcher. What is more, it is quite pos-

sible that Pinochet would still have faced trial in London, a situation more fraught with political tension than sending him off to Spain. In a tight corner Straw took the least turbulent option available to him.

Superficially the Murdoch case seems even more nightmarish, but it turned into a piece of cake for the Government. It has always been far too glib to suggest that when Murdoch clicks his fingers Blair delivers. For a start, Murdoch himself is not daft enough to expect or demand total subservience.

In this case, the Government, which likes to portray itself as a friend of football fans, was never going to cave in without considerable thought and calculation. These considerations would have included the fact that the relationship with the Murdoch press is, more precisely, The Sun - The Sunday Times and The Times, it is often forgotten, follow a right-wing agenda and are often hostile to the Government. It has changed a little, Blair's tentative support for the euro has seen to that.

But there will have been a wider calculation. While the Government is so popular, there is little chance that Murdoch will shift his alliance to the Conservatives.

As with the Law Lords and Pinochet, the Government had a shield in the form of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The moment the case was placed in their hands some of its sting was removed. For Byers to have overturned the Commission's recommendation would have reinforced the stereotype of

craven government kneeling at Murdoch's empire. The easier political choice was to block the deal.

Those who anticipate the appearance of Blair on The Sun's front page as an upside-down stuffed parrot are in for a disappointment. Doubtless the paper will try to stuff him in a number of ways when, or if, the euro campaign intensifies. But I hear that Murdoch does not blame the Government for his failure to become Manchester United's owner. Instead he is venting his ire on those at BSkyB who blew it. The relationship between Blair and Murdoch will endure, while the fans should be grateful that the Government blocked the bid.

In a Government as political as this one, ministerial reflections in advance of their decisions will have ranged widely. This is a Government that is progressive when it is popular to be so, daring only when it has to be. Jack Straw and Stephen Byers had to be daring, but they chose ways which would be the least unpopular.

No matter, both of them came to the right decisions. Torture is torture whether it took place before or after 1988. An empire's dominance of football and its coverage in the media was obviously anti-competitive, as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission declared.

Quite right, too, that two pragmatic, cautious politicians have given pause for thought both to a former dictator and to the most powerful media magnate in the world.

The writer is political editor of the New Statesman

AS FINANCE Minister, Anwar wanted to keep Malaysia's markets open, even if that meant interest rates would rise. That was anathema to Dr Mahathir, who was proud of Malaysia's spectacular growth under his rule. Mr Anwar, until then the likely successor to the Prime Minister, showed himself ready not only to defend his economic policies but to challenge Dr Mahathir's leadership. In this essentially political struggle, Dr Mahathir is still on

top. But the cost to Malaysia's economic, political and judicial institutions is yet to be counted. *Sydney Morning Herald*

THE SIX-year sentence is not particularly heavy in the circumstances of the whole affair. The indisputable fact is that in the country itself, sympathy is overwhelmingly not in Anwar's favour; popular concern being more for national stability, than in what really amounts to a vicious power struggle at the

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
Comment on the sentencing of Anwar Ibrahim to six years in prison

very top with Anwar losing out. Whatever the future development in this affair, Malaysia will not be the same again. *Hong Kong Standard*

THE FUTURE of Anwar depends on the fate of a planned coalition of opposition parties being cobbled together to end the National Front's reign and oust Mahathir from office. *Straits Times, Singapore*

IT IS impossible to know whether the young Malaysians Anwar courts will pass judgement in his favour at the next

elections. In most countries in our region citizens back moves towards democracy. Anwar's trial emphasised the position of Mahathir who is the last of a breed of Southeast Asian rulers, convinced his autocratic style of cronyism and patronage is best for his country. Anwar has emerged once from prison to become a national figure. With elections coming, and democracy in the air, he could just do it again. *Bangkok Post, Thailand*

QUOTE OF THE DAY
"This is a vindictive political act. He has placed his ambitions above his duties."
Baroness Thatcher, on Jack Straw's decision to extradite General Pinochet

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
"No people do so much harm as those who go about doing good."
Mandell Creighton, former Bishop of London

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PANDORA

THE SWORD of truth has been sheathed. Conservatives in Thanet South have chosen Mark MacGregor to win back the seat lost by the former "sleaze" minister Jonathan Aitken at the last election. MacGregor's curriculum vitae is formidable. At the moment he is busy co-ordinating the Tory campaign for this year's plethora of elections. In days gone by, his activities were even more futile. As chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students, MacGregor oversaw an organisation whose members espoused decriminalising incest, legalising hard drugs and privatising the Royal Family, and which claimed that Harold Macmillan was a war criminal. MacGregor himself was one of several extreme Tories who campaigned against the Anglo-Irish agreement in 1986 and was at the forefront of rebutting charges that the FCS had been involved in violence and vandalism at a university conference in Loughborough. All glamorous stuff, but in the end even Norman Tebbit thought the FCS too right-wing; he gave them a dose of their beloved capital punishment and chopped them off. Come back Jonathan, all is forgiven.

LIFE'S BITTER ironies. As Home Secretary Jack Straw sanctioned the extradition process against General Pinochet, a book about the corruption of justice in Chile was banned in Santiago. *The Black Book of Chilean Justice* managed only a day on the bookshelves before Servando Jordán, a former president of the supreme court and with a starring role in the book, successfully moved a writ against it. The author, Alejandra Matos, has, as they say, left the building.

LAUNCHED THIS week was the Channel 5 website, complete with a cartoon not-so-lookalike of the presenter Melinda Messenger (pictured). Only trouble was, those eager to surf 5's waters had to re-jig their software to get a picture. Sound familiar?

MEANWHILE, THE CS supremo David Elstein has switched channels on his long-held belief that the BBC should be funded by subscription. Conveniently, for the man who wants to take over from John Birt as Director-General of the Beeb, his about-turn in favour of the licence fee was screened at a forum of BBC governors this week. Having

achieved this nice bit of PR, Elstein, it may be safe to assume, is confident of his chances – so confident, in fact, that some say he has even forgotten to put in his application form and is simply waiting for the phone to ring.

"WE ARE a grandmother." Congrats to Pandora reader Shirley Williams, who is now a granny. "The hardest part of the birth was keeping her out of the delivery room," quipped the feisty baroness's son-in-law about the arrival of the sweet-natured baby Samuel Honey.

LAUNCHED THIS week, the smoker-friendly business card by Forest, the smokers' pressure group. Wheezers everywhere can now ingratiate themselves with non-smoking establishments by leaving a card that reads: "To the manager: sorry, but I won't be recommending your business to my friends and colleagues because your ban on smoking gets right up my nose." Fiery stuff.

ONE MAN who will be pleased by Manchester United's epic FA Cup victory this week is the Welsh nationalist leader Dafydd Wigley. The Plaid Cymru politician has supported the Red Devils since his time at Manchester University in the Sixties. Any guilt that Dafydd may have about not supporting Wrexham or Swansea is at least partly erased by the fact that Ryan Giggs – who scored the killer goal against Arsenal – is Welsh.

WINNER OF Pandora's saucer of milk this lap is that ageing club kid James St James. He's written a spectacularly vitriolic book called *Disco Bloodbath*, published today by Sceptre, about the notorious Michael Alig night-club murder.

Brit interest will probably centre on St James's searing allegations about Peter Gatten, the flamboyant night-club proprietor who created the Limekiln in London's Shaftesbury Avenue. For legal reasons we can't go into details here. But James does describe Alig, when he betrays Gatten by trying to frame him on racketeering charges, as "a grizzled old she-hag... bitter and lonely as a withered stick of rhubarb". Miao!

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

The Lords take leave of reality



PHILIP HENSHER

They may be getting on but the idea that 16-year-old boys are innocent is extraordinary

sexual orientation were something that could be influenced by government legislation, a government might come to the view that it would prefer to encourage heterosexuality, as it might prefer to encourage, say, cycling in the inner cities. But sexual orientation is not something susceptible to influence of this sort: hardly anyone ever has to make a decision between one

thing or the other, or to do more than come to terms with what is there.

The crucial point about a legislation that treats different orientations as equal in value is that it encourages people to think of homosexuality and heterosexuality as equally deserving of respect. Anyone who defends a law which enshrines their conviction that certain classes of people – not just ways of life, but people – are inferior in value to others ought to pause for a moment. They are on the same side as the Ku Klux Klan.

A great deal of guff was spoken about the protection of our children and the rights of parents. Only yesterday, *The Daily Telegraph* printed a letter that ran, in total: "We have grandsons aged 13, 12, 9 and 7. I thank God on my knees for the present House of Lords." Oh, right, I mean, as if, when you are 16, the preferences of your grandfather are of the slightest interest to you. What if one of those grandsons is by now homosexual? What does he deserve more – a rule of law that protects his grandfather's right to bigotry and hatred, or one that has no interest in passing judgement on

a way of life he never had to choose?

The wishes of parents and grandparents are of no importance in the end, and, even if they were, the law could do nothing at all to reinforce them. It is right for the law to tell parents that, at some point, the lives of their children become their own, and that is exactly what the age of consent legislation ought to do.

Some of the arguments advanced by the awful gang led by Lady Young, the voice of every taxi-driver in the country, were almost amusing in their lack of contact with reality. The conviction that 16 was far too young an age for sexual experience was upheld by almost every one of them. Well, I know they're getting on a bit, but the idea that 16-year-old boys are innocent in any way is extraordinary. Have these people never seen a class of 16-year-olds? Do they really suppose that the law has the slightest power to prevent them from doing to each other exactly what they want to do?

And it's right, really, that they should be allowed to. If no one were permitted to have a sexual relationship until they were mature enough to do so, most people would

have to wait a very long time. At some point, the law has to admit that people should have the freedom to behave as they want to. If it prefers to strike a pose – to say, as it did until a couple of years ago, that 20-year-old men must not have sex with each other – it will not achieve its aim; it will simply inculcate a wide-ranging contempt for the rule of law in a generation of people.

It is really difficult to think of anything more irresponsible than the behaviour of the Lords over this. Of course, they are doing it because they are demob-happy, and know that the Government is going to push the legislation through anyway. But, before evoking their power to throw out a Bill, they should have reflected that, in producing defences of bigotry and hatred, they gave some licence to the queer-bashers and bigots who, at present, see nothing wrong in homophobia.

The protection of the right to sexual expression is not a trivial issue. Behaving as if it were, the House of Lords has blithely damaged a few more lives when it had the chance to put an important measure of protection and caution in place.

It is time to rethink the aims of this savage war



DENIS HEALEY

In one sense Nato has become a biological monstrosity – an organ without a function

FIFTY YEARS ago Nato was born out of the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War. Its functions were defined by its first Secretary General, Lord Ismay. In a few words: to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down.

Since then, the Soviet Union has collapsed and Russia itself is disintegrating. A united Germany has become the most powerful country in Europe and America's closest ally. America itself still keeps forces in Europe but is increasingly conscious of its responsibilities as the world's only global super power. Its commitment to collective security in Europe through Nato is continually challenged in Congress by an odd alliance of isolationists and unilateralists.

In one sense, the end of the Cold War has made Nato a biological monstrosity – an organ without a function. When I asked a bright young officer from Brussels how many people are now working at Nato's HQ he replied: "About 20 per cent". Yet Nato is as valuable as ever. It provides a political and security framework through which the United States can involve its forces in peacekeeping, or peace-making, not only in Central Europe but also in south-eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The United Nations, which was set up to provide such a framework, has been rendered impotent by the veto of Russia and China.

In recent years Nato has made increasing efforts to develop co-operation with Russia in order to create a new framework for European security – an Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

However, by accepting Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as members, and by opening the prospect of membership to countries in the Baltic and Eastern Europe,

Nato has dangerously undermined its relations with Russia, and strengthened Yeltsin's Communist and nationalist opponents. This process has been aggravated by Nato's decision to intervene in the civil war in Yugoslavia without consulting Moscow.

The bombing of Serbia was particularly offensive to Russia since it took place when Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov was in fact halfway across the Atlantic for talks in Washington; even liberals such as Yegor Gaidar were appalled. The bombing was against the advice of the US military and was most unwelcome to Yugoslavia's neighbours in Nato, Greece, Italy, and Hungary – which has a large minority in northern Yugoslavia.

Even the Secretary General of Nato has expressed disquiet that there was no serious prior discussion with Nato on the operation's aims or means. It is still unclear whether Nato would be involved in providing land forces in Yugoslavia – and for what purpose.

All observers agree that the bombing has strengthened Milosevic's political position in Yugoslavia

and has led to more savage attacks on the people of Kosovo. Moreover, it has led to the death of innocent civilians in Belgrade and elsewhere – notably on a road convoy of Kosovo Albanian refugees this week.

There is growing disagreement in Washington over the operation's aims and targets; above all, there is no apparent exit strategy.

The best and now the only hope is that Nato may accept the need to engage with Russia in a major attempt to get a peaceful settlement of the Kosovo crisis, even if that means significant changes in Nato's present policy.

However, Nato's forthcoming summit meeting on 23 April may create new difficulties. It may publish a Membership Action Plan for Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Macedonia, Albania and Slovenia, which will be offered earlier membership provided that they modernise their entire armed forces in line with Nato – thus giving them priority over the Baltic States and former Soviet republics.

Moreover, it will open the possibility for Nato action beyond the existing treaty area, including central Asia. Nato has already carried out military exercises in Kazakhstan under American leadership. Nato is also requiring such countries to prepare more actively for participation in some type of a rapid reaction force.

America also wants the Summit to adopt a strategic concept that will include a new commitment to protect common interests and to act jointly against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

President Clinton has said that tomorrow's alliance must defend us against threats to our collective security from beyond Nato's borders, including the spread of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic violence, and regional conflict.

In theory this could open the



Tony Blair and Bill Clinton should look to the future Reuters

way to Nato intervention in the Middle East and in North Africa. This has alarmed some Nato leaders in Europe.

The French Parliamentary Defence Committee has gone much further. In its recent report it declared that last year's American missile strikes on Afghanistan and the Sudan show that Washington was "thumbing its nose at international organisations".

It also made it clear that France would not join any American-led effort to deploy an anti-missile shield in Europe, saying that "it could give the impression that Nato, having lost its enemy to the East, is now looking for one in the South".

Moreover, it added, "installing Nato a few dozen kilometres from St

Petersburg could seriously damage relations with Russia".

In stressing the need for a strong European identity within Nato, the French report argued that this would allow Europe to mount peace-keeping missions alone, if Washington proved reluctant to act.

It is clear that Tony Blair's idea of a European identity on foreign and defence policy may be interpreted differently across the Channel.

Once again Britain's determination to put first its relations with the United States is creating serious problems for its desire to appear at the heart of Europe.

It is high time that Britain used its position in Nato to seek changes in American policy – particularly with regard to Yugoslavia.

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The Tories must be a pro-euro party

THE CRITICAL choice facing this country is now coming to a head. In as little as two-and-a-half years' time, we may well face the moment of truth.

A referendum is to be held that will shape Britain's place in Europe, and our power as a nation in and through Europe, for many decades to come. It is vital, as a European player and indeed as a global player, that we make the right choice for Britain's future.

If the Government recommends UK entry into the single European currency, once the economics of membership are right, I and many other pro-European Conservatives will support the "yes" campaign with enthusiasm.

That is why I have already joined the advisory board of the Britain in Europe campaign as an observer. That is why, as we have signalled, Kenneth Clarke, Michael Heseltine, I – and others – will help launch the full cross-party political campaign later this year, once the European elections are safely out of the way.

Some have criticised us for waiting until the summer. I disagree. We have made it clear

to our party leadership that we believe there are perfectly good left-right issues on which the Euro-election campaign can and should be fought: the social chapter, deregulation, industrial policy, tax harmonisation, spending priorities, and the handling of maladministration and fraud.

This should be the battleground of June's contest. The European Parliament's power has grown decisively. The key issue is who controls that power. This may be – indeed it certainly is – a Euro-election, but it is not – and should not be – an election about the euro. The European Parliament cannot and will not decide whether Britain joins monetary union.

As we believe that the euro is not the issue in June, we do not wish to see the Euro-election converted into a mini-referendum on the single currency. Divisions of opinion about the euro could make or break the Conservative campaign in this election.

Those of us who take a positive view of Britain's future within the eurozone have signalled our desire to make, not break, that campaign – on the



PODIUM

GEOFFREY HOWE
From a speech given by the former Cabinet minister Lord Howe to European Movement's conference, Birmingham

assumption that good sense and a balanced approach will similarly characterise the official Conservative campaign.

That requires a degree of self-discipline and self-restraint to be evidenced on all sides. There is a serious chance that it will be so.

After June, the real battle over EMU will begin. Pro-Europeans of all parties and of none should be under no illusion about the challenge of win-

ning a future referendum. The forces ranged against us are considerable, their financial firepower is impressive, and their arguments, however wrong, are often well put. This will not be an easy fight.

My strong belief is that the Conservative Party can never win power as a euro-hostile party, because it will be a divided party and one bereft of its business base. But this does not mean that the British people can never vote "no" in an EMU referendum. Public opinion is up for grabs.

The attitude of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown will be the critical determinant of how the public reacts. They must show that they want Britain in and intend to lead Britain in, and are actively preparing the nation for this historic change.

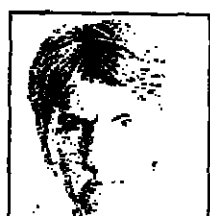
As we have said ever since the Chancellor's statement of October 1997 – in effect ruling out entry or even a referendum in this Parliament – Britain will not join EMU by accident. Getting to a "yes" vote on the euro involves not waiting for the economics to come right, but positively working for them to come right. It involves leading from the front and using scarce

political capital to get the right answer to the most important economic and political question facing our country today.

The National Changeover Plan, announced by the Prime Minister on 23 February, was a start. But it needs to be part of a rising curve of commitment and activity. I believe that Tony Blair did cross a Rubicon on that day – and that now there is no going back. And he did not cross the river just to remain standing on the bank. He signalled – and he will be held to that signal by the Euro-sceptic press – that by the end of his time as Prime Minister, he wants Britain to be in the single currency, as a full and equal partner in the EU.

That is why we pro-European Conservatives, welcoming that aspiration, saw Mr Blair's February statement as significant. To carry the campaign forward requires the Prime Minister and the Chancellor to lead the national campaign for euro-membership, rather than to see this as something organised by others. Just as we shall participate in this campaign from the summer, so must they. I believe they will.

Your future life signposted



STEVE CONNOR

If drug companies sacrifice their rights it must mean something important is going on

WE ARE about to enter a new era in medical science that will almost certainly bring about as profound a change in the way we live and die than anything we have witnessed as a result of 20th-century medicine. For a period that saw the discovery of antibiotics and the implementation of mass immunisation, leading to the near-elimination of many notorious childhood killers, that may appear an outlandish thing to say. Let me explain.

Yesterday, five world-renowned centres of biomedical excellence teamed up with 10 multinational drug companies to form an unprecedented alliance. The aim of the consortium is to discover the genetic "signposts" that could be used by doctors of the 21st century to predict a patient's future susceptibility to disease. Not only that, the signposts could be used to treat patients with tailor-made drugs, specifically designed to combat the disease in question and to prevent side-effects in those with a certain genetic constitution.

The signposts in question are technically known as SNPs, or single nucleotide polymorphisms. They represent the smallest change possible in a gene and, as such, the genetic difference between one person and another is effectively the result of the differences in their SNPs. For every 1,000 "letters" in the genetic alphabet or code of a human gene, there is typically one SNP. This means that two unrelated people have roughly a million SNPs to distinguish between them. The SNPs are known as signposts because they can be strongly associated with a specific disease. They can indicate the inheritance of a conventional genetic disorder, such as cystic fibrosis or haemophilia, and more importantly they can act as a marker or test for other genes that confer a predisposition for more common illnesses, such as cancer, asthma and diabetes. If there are problems run in your family, there is almost certainly a group of as-yet undiscovered SNPs that could be used to estimate your risk of suffering a heart attack.

In other words, a database of SNPs - a map of the genetic signposts - could tell doctors of the future what a person is likely to die



A scientist studies a series of DNA sequencing autoradiograms, or genetic fingerprints, through a magnifying glass

Geoff Tompkinson/Science Photo Library

of and what must be done to avert the disaster. All that is needed is to compare a patient's genetic profile against a set of known genetic signposts, and, hey presto, get a read-out to reveal not only what a person is likely to die of, but at what age the disease will present itself.

This is not so futuristic as it may seem. Already there is a little-known genetic test that can predict whether a person is likely to develop Alzheimer's disease, and at what age this will most probably occur. Drug companies have an obvious vested interest in the results of such research. But what makes the 15-strong consortium so unusual is that all parties have vowed that, whatever information they gather about these all-important signposts, it will be published straightaway and will be freely available to anyone who wants it. Because the data will be in the public domain, no one will be able to patent the genetic material and so there will be no restrictions on who can take advantage of the information.

Why is this so important for the rest of us? One clue comes from the fact that drug companies, which are notoriously secretive about research, seem prepared to join forces and publish information

openly. It is a mark of the importance they have attached to the huge potential benefits emanating from the international initiative to unravel the entire genetic map of man - the Human Genome Project. If drug companies are prepared to sacrifice their exclusive rights, it must mean something pretty earth-shattering is going on.

An immediate worry of the drug firms is that several smaller companies, which were specifically set up to be the first to discover the genetic signposts for disease, are going to find and patent the material, and so restrict their commercial exploitation. Several outfits, in the US and Europe, are known to be unravelling the genetic sequence of human genes as fast as they can in order to patent the information before anyone else. One such company, Genset, in Paris, is said to have found and applied for patents on two genetic traits that indicate a predisposition to prostate cancer. It is offering intellectual rights on the patents for a sum said to lie somewhere between £30m and £60m.

The consortium, led by the Wellcome Trust, Britain's largest medical research charity, says it wants to identify about 300,000 genetic signposts, and to map the precise

whereabouts of about half of these on each of the 23 pairs of human chromosomes, over the next two years. This may seem a bold objective, but it in fact represents only 10 per cent of the total number of signposts that are believed to exist. It is, nevertheless, a far bolder attempt to unravel the genetic indicators of disease than anything else going on in the world.

The 10 drug companies have therefore deftly carried out a nice piece of anti-competitive work aimed at frustrating those smaller gene-sequencing operations, while basking in the glory of making everything they discover open and therefore unpatentable. They have realised that there is strong opposition to patenting human genes and have assumed, probably quite rightly, that the effort to place everything in the public domain will be applauded.

Indeed, one vociferous opponent of gene patenting - the Genetic Interest Group, representing families affected by inherited disorders - believes that any form of patenting on parts of the human body, including genes, will discourage rather than encourage research and development. "There are serious ethical and moral objections to

the notion that part of the human body could be patentable. Genes and DNA are natural parts of the human body," the group has ruled.

In fact, the "genes" that form part of a patent are not physically bits of a body. They are merely bits of information that can be written down on paper. If someone can use this to invent something - a genetic test, say - then surely they must have the right to protect that invention against plagiarism? The problem, as I see it, comes when the patent is so broad that it stifles research by dissuading others from engaging in work which they think is likely to end up being the subject of a lengthy and costly lawsuit for patent infringement.

This is what lies behind the action of the drug companies which yesterday formed the consortium with five biomedical centres, including Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, where one of the founding fathers of modern genetics, Jim Watson, holds court. Getting into bed with academics such as Watson - who has always argued for open access to information regarding human genes - was a smart move because it meant that the drug monopolists could argue that they have the saints on their side.

Yesterday's announcement, made in the dying embers of the 20th century, has set the scene for what we are to expect in the years to come. When asked where the technology is likely to end up, Michael Morgan, the head of the Wellcome Trust's initiative to unravel the human genome, gave this honest assessment of the future: "I think the way it will end up is like pregnancy testing. It will first of all be done only in research clinics. If it then comes into a doctor's office, and it'll then become a dipstick in the chemist's."

In the longer term, the use to which the genetic signposts will be put raises far more serious ethical concerns than anything related to the question of patents. For instance, what will it mean for people to be told they are likely to develop an illness for which there is no cure? Some ethicists argue that this sort of information is too dangerous for people to know, but what about third parties, such as insurance companies? You may not want to know you have a 91 per cent chance of developing Alzheimer's disease by the age of 68, but I bet the insurance company offering to take out a post-retirement policy against long-term care would like to know.

RIGHT OF REPLY

AILSA OGILVIE



A director of the charity Scope responds to a recent article by Sue Arnold

SUE ARNOLD'S light-hearted dig at charity fundraising ("Does charity begin at the Great Wall of China?", Weekend Review, 10 April 1999) pinpoints the fact that these days it takes a lot more than pure altruism to encourage people to get involved with raising money.

She's right. We don't live in a "something for nothing" culture. The rising popularity of overseas charity fundraising events taps into something many want to get involved in. People like the challenge of getting fit to do tough treks and cycle rides.

But she is wrong to say that sponsoring someone to do such events is financing "what is basically a package holiday with optional excursions". In exchange for the chance to experience the challenge of a lifetime, participants must give a big commitment to help the charity, and significant sums of money have to be raised. Take the example of Scope. The charity raised more than £2m from its overseas events last year alone. This is a vital new source of income.

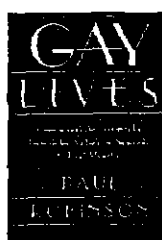
Of course, there are some participants who can afford to cover the required minimum sponsorship themselves, but the vast majority spend months fundraising in their local communities and raising awareness of what Scope does. This often leads to friends and family wanting to get involved in the future. It is common for much more than the minimum amount to be raised. I can assure your readers that these events are not holidays. Sue Arnold could take part in Scope's Grand Canyon Bike Away or white-water rafting on the Zambezi. This would give first-hand experience of the effort and commitment of people of all ages striving to raise money to fund the vital services we provide to people with cerebral palsy and associated disabilities.

A pattern tie to bind gay authors

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES ARE, by their very nature, individual works. If, however, we look at the autobiographies of people who have in common something as crucially defining as homosexuality, we may be able to draw some general conclusions about sex and society.

Paul Robinson is a cultural historian rather than a literary critic, and although he subjects his 14 texts to close readings and is finely alert to their authors' literary as well as psychological strategies, his principal interest is in the way these books reflect the similarities and differences of homosexual experience, and in the influences exerted on the lives of their authors by history and nationality.

Six of his writers are British, three French, and five American. The oldest was born in 1840, the youngest in



FRIDAY BOOK

GAY LIVES: HOMOSEXUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY FROM JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS TO PAUL MONETTE

BY PAUL ROBINSON. UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS. £23.95

1947. Some of their accounts are dispiriting, others are heartening.

"When I began work on this book I had no hypothesis about what general story it might tell," Robinson writes. "And in the end no such story has emerged, or, if one exists, I have failed to detect it."

This may be true, but Robinson has nevertheless been able to trace some patterns. The British writers have "a

fascination with the lower classes"; the French "tend to put their stories through a philosophical wringer"; the Americans are inclined to write "coming-out stories" that "invite comparison with the conversion narratives that figure so prominently in the Western cultural tradition".

He detects a concern with masculinity and effeminacy in all the stories, and discusses notions of "solidarity" - not merely the political solidarity that came out of the postwar liberation movement, but also the tribal loyalties referred to in the title of Christopher Isherwood's *Christopher and His Kind*.

Some of these books were like messages in bottles, unpublished during writers' lives but left for posterity. The most extreme case is JA Symonds, whose autobiography did not appear until 91 years after his death - an astonishing Victorian document to unleash upon the Eighties. While Symonds and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson felt that their stories would be of interest and benefit to others of their kind, and perhaps to society at large, neither makes particularly cheering reading.

Similarly, Robinson's three Frenchmen are hardly role-models: Andre Gide escaping the confines of marriage to pursue Arab boys, Jean Genet abasing himself before assorted thugs, and Julien Green dividing his time between "writing his Pamphlet against the Catholics in France - which celebrates the Inquisition and attacks

modern Catholicism for its moral laxity - and squalid nights cruising near the Trouadero".

As Robinson notes: "The history of gay autobiography in France confounds our naïve expectation that the genre should move inexorably towards self-affirmation."

Robinson has arranged his material skilfully. For example, he discusses J.R. Ackerley's *My Father and Myself* in tandem with Quentin Crisp's *The Naked Civil Servant*. He notes that although the two books are "set in the same town at more or less the same time... the worlds Ackerley and Crisp inhabited and the lives they pursued seem so alien from one another as to constitute virtually separate universes."

Two Americans, Jeb Alexander and Donald Vining, representing the Twenties and the Forties, also produce a poignant contrast. Alexander narrates "a descent into loneliness, despair and drunken inertia" in Washington, while Vining "moves in the direction of ever-greater assurance, contentment and activity" in New York.

Occasionally, such groupings for effect seem a little unfair. A distinctly uncharitable discussion of the waveringly bisexual Stephen Spender's *World Within World* is sandwiched between much friendlier analyses of the absolutely queer Isherwood's *Loans and Shadows* and Christopher and His Kind. Robinson correctly notes that *Loans and Shadows* "is ingeniously contrived to be perceived differently by two different imagined audiences: the general public, which is properly heterosexual, and an audience of sympathetic conspirators, essentially homosexual, who will respond with recognition and pleasure to the author's carefully coded secret history".

However, he derives no such pleasure from Spender's book, which is more open about the author's homo-



Quentin Crisp: among the authors studied

Gapin Kent

sexuality. Robinson merely finds it dishonest and evasive.

On the whole, Robinson is a reliable and entertaining guide. He writes lucidly, avoiding jargon even when writing about the "essentialist" and "social constructionist" views of homosexuality. Unlike Julien Green, who "can hardly bring himself to describe any part of the body below the neck", Robinson is amusingly forthright about sex. I particularly enjoyed his observation that Andrew Tobias, author of *The Best Little Boy in the World*, "took it for granted that he needed to work on his sexual skills. His determination to do better reflects a typically American devotion to self-improvement."

PETER PARKER

Kosova children appeal to Independent readers

Thousands of Kosovar refugee children now face death from hunger, cold and disease. Most are in deep shock. Many have witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, cannot support this massive influx of refugees.



Your action will save children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to expand our emergency centre in northern Albania to help thousands of refugees. Our team has been working with displaced Kosovar families since this tragedy began. We are ready to provide food, medical aid and clothing to the confused and frightened children who arrive daily.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever. Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

£30 could buy emergency medicine and food for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Known Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KB359, 646 Queens Street, London, EC4B 4AP.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below

I enclose ☐ £30 ☐ my choice £_____ to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please). Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card:

Card no. _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone no. _____

Please return to: Don McCreedy, (114), Kosova Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KB359, 646 Queens Street, London, EC4B 4AP.

Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.

Please act NOW - your gift will save lives



Anthony Newley

ONE OF Britain's most distinctive talents, Anthony Newley was an actor, singer, composer and writer who had his first starring role in films at the age of 16, composed hit musicals and songs, topped the hit parade himself as a pop star, played everything from romantic leads to quirky character roles in movies, starred on both the West End and Broadway stages, and became a favourite of cabaret audiences from New York to Las Vegas.

His elongated Cockney vowel sounds made his voice an unmistakable one which people either loved or hated. He served him well on novelty songs such as "Pop Goes the Weasel", but he was also a fine ballad singer. "What Kind of Fool Am I", "Who Can I Turn To" and "Candy Man" were just three of the hit songs he co-wrote. "I'm not a trained musician or singer," he once said, "but I can turn out a song."

Born in Hackney, east London, in 1931, he left school at the age of 14. "The saddest thing about myself," he later said, "is that I never read a book. I never got the habit." He was working as an office boy for an insurance company when he spotted a newspaper advertisement reading "Boy Actors Urgently Wanted". Said Newley later, "Suddenly the bell rang! I applied to the advertisers, the Italia Conti Stage School, only to discover the fees were too high." The school agreed to let him audition, however ("I had to read poems to two sweet old ladies who were charmed with my cockney accent"), and were impressed enough to offer him free tuition and a salary of 30 shillings a week as an office boy. The producer Geoffrey de Barquis spotted Newley at the school and gave him the leading role in a children's film serial, *The Adventures of Dusty Bates* (1947).

Newley was already displaying a distinctly individual style of agreeably knowing confidence, and after another children's film, *The Little Ballerina* (1947), he was given the plum role of a boy who magically changes places with his own father in *Vice Versa* (1947), directed by Peter Ustinov. Ustinov recently said, "I was amazed at how convincing Anthony Newley was as someone with an old mind inside him." One of the stars of the film was Kay Walsh, whose ex-husband David Lean was about to direct a screen version of *Oliver Twist*. Walsh rang Lean and told him, "I've found your Artful Dodger," and Newley's superbly insolent and cheeky performance became one of the many reasons that the 1948 film became a classic.

Given a contract by the Rank Organisation, the actor then settled into a comfortable niche as a character player, often as cocky cockneys, in such films as *Here Come the Hugges* (1948), during the filming of which the actor later claimed to have lost his virginity to Diana Dors. *The Guinea Pig* (1948) and *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike* (1949), but when Rank dropped him after a year his film career faltered and he spent some time in repertory. Later he played chippy enlisted men in war films including *Above Us the Waves* (1955), *The Bat-*

tle of the River Plate (1955) and *Cockleshell Heroes* (1955).

It was in 1956 that he was able to display just how versatile he was when he starred with Annie Ross in the musical revue *Cronks* at the small club theatre the New Watergate. This off-beat, almost surreal show proved a hit and transferred to the West End, to St Martin's Theatre, in March 1956, where it had a successful run before going to Broadway, where it fared less well. Newley's engaging rendition of such numbers as "I'm the Boy (You Should Say Yes To)" contributed greatly to the show's charm, and in 1956 he toured England with his own variety show.

A turning point came with a literally star-making role in the low-budget musical film *Idle on Parade* (1959) in which Newley played a rock 'n' roll star inducted into the Army (in America the film was called *Idle on Parade*). One of his numbers in the film, "I've Waited So Long" (composed by Jerry Lordan) became a pop sensation and overnight Newley found himself a teenage heart-throb. In 1960 he had seven records in the charts, including Lloyd Price and Harold Logan's "Personality" and two No 1 hits, the wistful "Why," by Robert Marcucci, and Peter de Angelis and Lionel Bart's "Do You Mind".

'I don't hate anybody or anything. But I do expect to make statements about the problems of being a human being'

Newley surprised his public again when in 1960 he made his first record album, *Love Is a Now and Then Thing*, a beautiful set of ballads such as "This Time the Dream's on Me" and "I Get Along Without You Very Well" which he handled with appealing sensitivity. Never one to embrace the conventional, Newley next starred in a television series which, though short-lived, is remembered as one of the most avant-garde in television history. *The Strange World of Gurney Slade* (1960) was a bizarre show in which the central character (named by Newley after the Somerset village of the same name) talked to animals and inanimate objects, heard what people were thinking, had conversations with people who could not see him, and moved in and out of reality. Though written by Sid Green and Dick Hills, its concept was doubtless embraced and heavily influenced by the star.

Newley next fulfilled a long-standing ambition to star in his own stage musical, and fortuitously began a partnership with the com-

poser and author Leslie Bricusse. Newley was later to tell an American columnist, "I'm the laziest son-of-a-bitch who ever drew a breath. I sleep till one and I'm always surprised when someone in blue rinse on a talk show says, 'You're a genius.' Mr Newley, you do so many things." Tony Newley never realised his potential, did the things he should have done. That's why I need Leslie Bricusse - he has plenty of ambition."

With Bricusse, Newley wrote the book and score of *Stop the World I Want to Get Off*, in which Newley starred as Littlechap, an Everyman figure whose whole life is depicted in the show. Newley said, "The role of Littlechap, surrounded by the type of chorus once used in Greek drama, has presented us with a challenge which any cast would surely enjoy tackling." Directed by Newley, the show opened at the Queen's Theatre in July 1961 and was a smash hit. Its songs including "What Kind of Fool Am I", "Gonna Build a Mountain" (a hit record for Matt Monro) and "Once in a Lifetime". Sammy Davis was one of many who recorded the songs - he became a close friend of Newley and a great champion of the Newley-Bricusse catalogue.

When Newley was asked why most of his songs became hit records for other singers, he replied, "Sammy Davis, Andy Williams, Tony Bennett... their records sell in the millions; when I do it, it just trickles. But for the composer and lyricist there's a tiny bit to be made that way too, so I don't really mind." "What Kind of Fool Am I" won the 1962 Grammy Award as song of the year and has been recorded by over 70 vocalists, though Newley's own recording ran into trouble because he sang the word "damn" - he later made another recording which could be played on sensitive radio stations.

In 1962 *Stop the World* moved to Broadway where, produced by David Merrick who had bought the American rights while it had been trying out in Nottingham ("I felt no need to wait and see if it would be a hit in London - I had been thoroughly entertained and absorbed by the freshness of conception shown by its authors"), it ran for over 500 performances. Both the London and New York productions were directed by Newley, of whom Merrick was to write, "I have no doubts at all that Mr Newley is going to enjoy widespread and durable success in America. The man does everything - he acts well; he sings with individuality and verve; and most importantly, he is an exceptionally attractive performer. His personality is dynamic and he projects a brilliance of spirit."

During the show's run in 1963 Newley, who had previously been wed to Tiller Gill-turned-actress Ann Lynn, married Joan Collins. "Like most men of my generation," he said, "I had drooled over pictures of Joan. And there she was, backstage at *Stop the World* and I could not believe it. Did I ask her for a date? Yes I did." Collins described Newley at the time as "a half-Jewish Cockney git" and herself as



Newley with Joan Collins. 'I had drooled over pictures of Joan,' he said. They married in 1963

"a half-Jewish princess from Bayswater via Sunset Boulevard".

The following year the Bricusse-Newley team had a big hit with their lyrics to John Barry's music for *Goldfinger*, sung over the titles of the James Bond film by Shirley Bassey. The next Newley-Bricusse musical, *The Roar of the Greasepaint - the Smell of the Crowd*, "a comic allegory about the class system in contemporary Britain", had a better score than its predecessor but its 1964 tryout in Nottingham, starring Norman Wisdom and directed by Newley, did not prove satisfactory and it failed to reach London. David Merrick was again impressed, and offered to take it to Broadway if Newley would assume the leading role.

Co-starring Cyril Ritchard (representing the "haves" to Newley's down-trodden "have-nots"), the show received mixed reviews for its libretto's pretensions ("third-rate commerce masquerading as art," said Walter Kerr of the *Herald-Tribune*), but unanimous praise for the songs and performances. Whitney Bolton wrote in the *Morning*

Telegraph: "Mr Newley uses his own inventions, plus deliberate and useful, justifiably purloined gestures common to Charlie Chaplin, Lupino Lane, Buster Keaton, Stan Laurel and others, as though giving us a portrait gallery of great comics who have made their names as Little Men against the harsh world."

The score "bursting with songs, all good and several of hit quality," wrote *Variety*, was exceptional, its hits including "Who Can I Turn To" (already a hit record by Tony Bennett when the show opened), "A Wonderful Day Like Today", "The Joker", "Nothing Can Stop Me Now", "Look at That Face" and "Sweet Beginning". The original cast album sold over 100,000 copies, and the show ran for over eight months. Newley and Bricusse were nominated for the Tony Award for Best Score, and Newley was nominated for Best Director, but this was the year that *Fiddler on the Roof* took most of the major musical awards. Asked about his predilection for writing about the problems of the "Little Man", Newley replied, "I

don't hate anybody or anything. But I do expect to make statements about the problems of being a human being."

Newley made his American film debut with a leading role in the film *Doctor Doolittle* (1967), with Bricusse alone providing the songs, though Newley made a fine solo album of the score. The actor then starred with Sandy Dennis in *Sweet November* (1968), a sentimental but rarely mawkish tale of a dying girl who takes a different sweetheart every month.

Newley's own marriage was under pressure and in 1969 he produced, directed and co-wrote *Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Hump and Find True Happiness?*, co-starring Collins and with plainly autobiographical overtones. "A zany erotobiography that looks like a Marx Brothers' movie shot in a nudist camp," was *Playboy's* description of the film, which was not a success. For the score, Newley collaborated with Herbert Kretzmer, who became a lifelong friend.

"Although I was the lyricist, the film's concept and the ideas for the

songs were Newley's - he was the architect and I the builder," said Kretzmer. One of the songs they wrote, "When You Gotta Go", was for a time a staple of Barbra Streisand's stage act. Newley and Collins were divorced in 1970, and Newley's third marriage, to an air hostess, Dareth Rich, also ended in divorce. "My only regret is that in a show-business career you can have no private life," said Newley.

He and Bricusse wrote the songs for the 1971 film fantasy *Willie Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, including the hit "Candy Man". In 1972 he returned to the West End stage with *The Good Old Bad Old Days*, which had book, music and lyrics by Newley and Bricusse and direction by Newley. Despite a tenuous score and a personal success, the show had only a moderate run and Newley began to spend more time in the United States, where he had bought a house and had developed a large following. In 1974 he starred with Henry Mancini in a musical revue on Broadway, and he became a top night-club entertainer, with sell-out appearances in Las Vegas. His last major film was *Mister Quilp* (1976), for which he wrote both music and lyrics, though he made several television movies.

In 1985 he was diagnosed with cancer and had one kidney removed. Returning to England, he moved in with his mother Gracie in Esher, Surrey. With his illness arrested, he continued to work, appearing in television shows, touring in a stage production of Leslie Bricusse's musical *Scrooge*, and last year playing a successful London cabaret engagement. On television he played an amorous used-car dealer in several episodes of *EastEnders*.

For the last seven years his partner was Gina Fratini, but he was a valued friend to all those close to him and he had remained on good terms with both Joan Collins and Dareth Rich - Collins would be seen at all of Newley's London openings. Herbert Kretzmer said of Newley, "It's a hackneyed phrase I know, but Newley was truly a 'one-off', a totally unique and original talent." Leslie Bricusse echoed these sentiments when he wrote, "Never once have I known Tony to falter for one moment in his perpetual quest for something original - to say things and do things in a new way - to find fresh excitement, even in old themes. He takes infinite pains to bring style and originality to everything he touches."

"He was a true original," said Kretzmer, "driven by the need to innovate and contemptuous of repetition or the following of fashion. His wish was always to break boundaries and push frontiers back."

TOM VALLANCE

George Anthony Newley, actor, singer, composer and writer: born London 24 September 1931; married 1956 Ann Lynn (marriage dissolved); 1963 Joan Collins (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1970); thirdly Dareth Rich (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved); died Jensen Beach, Florida 14 April 1999.

Nicola Trussardi

NICOLA TRUSSARDI was one of the generation that led the renaissance in Italian style during the 1970s and 1980s, when small family enterprises mushroomed into huge fashion and accessories empires. His contemporaries, designers and business entrepreneurs like himself, put Italian fashion on the map. Their design, production and marketing acumen transformed a cottage industry into a global business.

As a result of Nicola Trussardi's dedication and tenacious spirit, Trussardi is one of the most familiar names of Italy's luxury fashion brands. He was a man of ambition and recognised that the family business of glove-making - founded in Bergamo, outside Milan, by his grandfather Dante Trussardi in 1910 - was going nowhere during the young fashion boom of the Sixties. "Gloves were a thing of the past," he remembered, "rendered obsolete by the socio-cultural revolution... and I had two options before me: either turn my hand to something else, or try and rebuild the business, to preserve and update the good family name that had been acquired over the years."

Nicola Trussardi was born in Bergamo in 1942 and, having graduated in economic and commercial sciences from the Catholic University in Milan, entered the family business in 1970 on the sudden death of his father and brother. He began transforming the business by venturing into fashion at about the same time that young designers like Gianni Versace, Giorgio Armani, Gianfranco Ferré and the Missonis were beginning to make their mark.

The house tried hard to become part of the hip and trendy ready-to-wear movement, but the results were a bit hit-and-miss. However,



its leather fashion and accessories were a huge success. Nicola Trussardi introduced ranges of watches, jewellery, shoes, bags, luggage and belts all bearing the familiar sleek greyhound logo, and by 1996 sales had reached about \$485m in 118 Trussardi boutiques around the world. More recently Trussardi launched the T Store and a jeans line designed by the Paris-based American designer Jeremy Scott.

Nicola Trussardi remained fascinated, though, with the processes of leather-making and modernised the fine glove-making skills of his atelier, developing new and sophisticated techniques for working leather that gave opportunities to expand into new fields. Home furnishings, aircraft and helicopter interiors all display the imprint of the Trussardi style. He worked with Lancia, Leyland and Alfa Romeo and launched a range of expensive leather-finished bicycles and Velobikes. In the early 1990s he expanded the business to invest in banks, real estate companies and chemical industries, and

He was like a modern-day Renaissance princeling. Pavarotti called him 'the greatest ambassador of "Made in Italy" in the world'

set up joint ventures in the United States, Europe and Japan.

He was a dynamic and focused businessman and kept a tight rein on the company, controlling every aspect of the business from finance to design and advertising campaigns. "Few people are so sincerely involved in every aspect of their work as Nicola Trussardi," says the fashion photographer Steven Klein. "It was great to collaborate with a designer who was so readily available to the photographer and so willing to take chances." Trussardi was charming, highly regarded by his staff, good at media relations and conscientious if a problem had to be solved.

Trussardi enjoyed a life surrounded by beautiful things and powerful friends, and was a close friend of the former Italian premier Bettino Craxi before he was toppled in corruption scandals in the early 1990s. Trussardi was once described by Luciano Pavarotti as "one of the best ambassadors of 'Made in Italy' in the world. All his creations are characterised by great

taste, great style, especially in choice of materials."

He owned a Renaissance villa at Bergamo and enjoyed sailing near his home on the tiny elite island of Elba, off the Tuscan coast. The house, designed by a pupil of Le Corbusier, was filled with a fine collection of modern art including works by Magritte and De Chirico. There he entertained Pavarotti, Umberto Eco, Queen Noor of Jordan, Tina Turner and Robert Altman. He made a guest appearance as himself in Altman's 1994 fashion movie *Pret-a-Porter*.

Like a modern-day Renaissance princeling he had a passion for the arts and transformed a former hotel, the Palazzo Marino alla Scala, into the company headquarters, with a museum and art gallery on the upper floor. He was keen to raise cultural awareness and hosted exhibitions of work by Picasso, Allan Jones and Van Gogh, and photography by Dennis Hopper, Eve Arnold and Robert Mapplethorpe. His interest in the arts spread to music when he participated in a festival dedicated to Paganini at the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg in 1995 and jointly sponsored a Pavarotti and Friends concert for the charity War Child the following year.

His death came as a result of an accident when he was driving home to Bergamo after the private view of a new exhibition in his gallery on Monday. His car went out of control on a road exit ramp and crashed at high speed.

FRANCESCA FEARON

Nicola Trussardi, fashion designer and businessman: born Bergamo, Italy 17 June 1942; married Maria Luisa Gavuzzoni (two sons, two daughters); died Milan 14 April 1999.

Garth Robinson

GARTH ROBINSON was a biochemist at Oxford University for over 30 years, who became briefly, in the early Eighties, a national hero for his progressive policies on lawn mowing. "Why bother with a hover?" called the newspaper headlines.

Robinson joined a lively, if individualistic, department in 1965, where he carried out research into kidney basement membranes and their relevance to nephritis, the inflammation of the kidneys. He became involved in the development of artificial membranes, which mimicked filter membranes outside the body, allowing the testing of various agents that could damage the kidney. At a time when many turned to molecular biochemistry he remained fascinated by the properties of whole biological structures, thereby contributing a valued breadth to the study and teaching in the department. Within the university he served as Chairman of the sub-Faculty of Biochemistry and Chairman of the Faculty of Biological Sciences.

In college he was an enthusiastic tutor who made substantial demands on his pupils but inspired them with his novel and somewhat irreverent approach. This also characterised his contribution to the college which he joined at a time of rapid expansion and development. Every problem was analysed from first principles, often leading him to suggest fundamental changes in how things were done. He never let the fact that change in Oxford tends to proceed in increments deter him and his opinions often triumphed at college meetings. He made invaluable contributions to the Finance Committee, and to the gratitude of the Fellows was long an outstanding Cellarmaster.

One of his hobbies was gardening, which he saw mainly as a method for producing food. He had no patience with cultivated flowers which merely took up valuable vegetable space, but was passionate about wild flowers. He advocated that gardens should be freely planted with them years before this became fashion-

able, and he declined to cut his front lawn until after their seeds had matured, much to the offence of the neighbours in the fashionable small estate on which he lived. When he circulated among them an essay outlining his policy, it was picked up by Radio Oxford, and in turn by the BBC Today programme.

Television coverage and a phone-in on the subject followed. Robinson was seen as a hero, liberating the middle class from a weekly chore. His last laugh was that after some years of his grass being treated in this way a conserved bee orchid appeared.

This was not eccentricity. It was rather the result of a careful consideration of ecology and a determination to allow his grandchildren to enjoy the diverse biological world that he had.

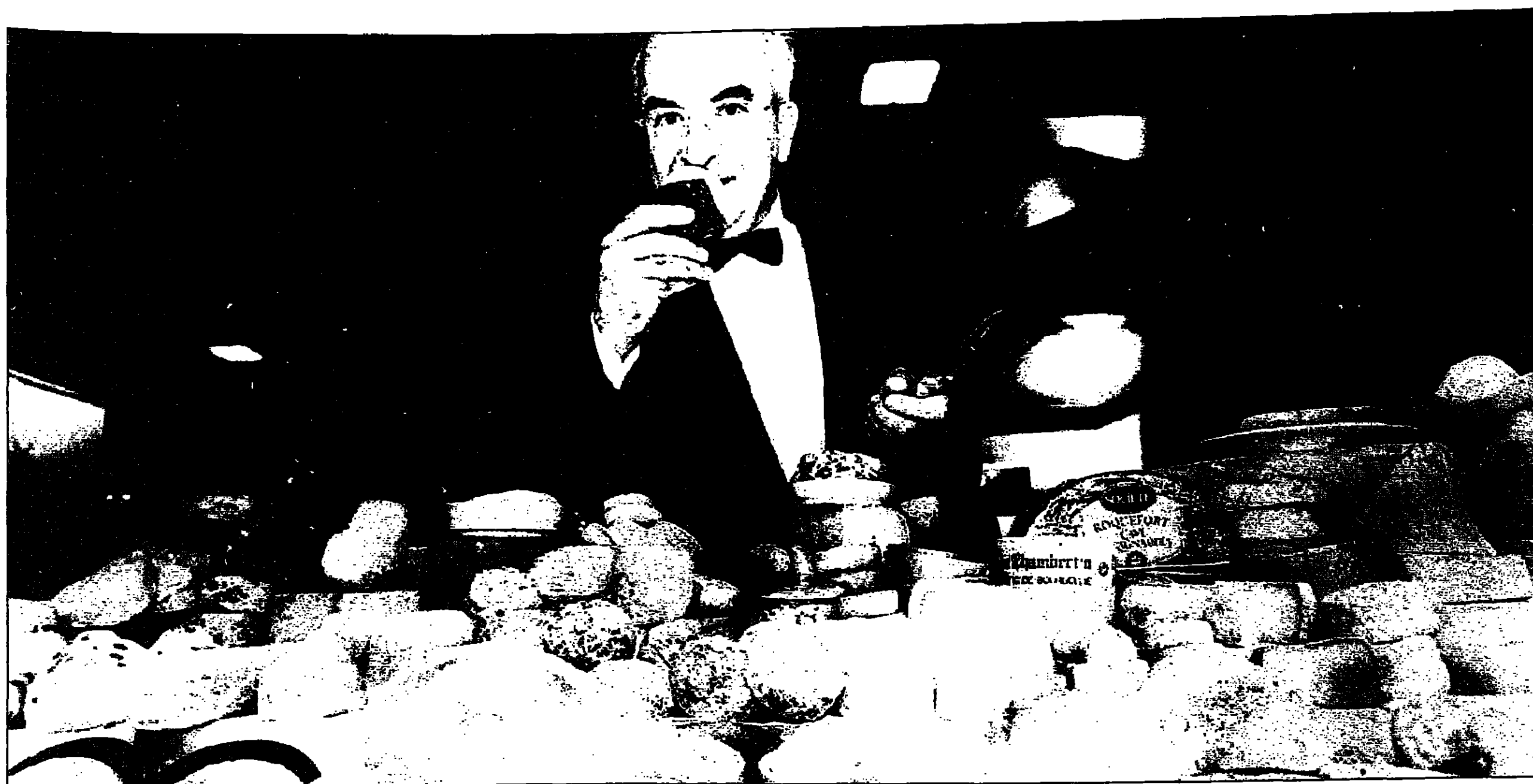
Robinson retired early in 1996 to walk, climb and pursue his many interests outside of science, but this was cruelly thwarted by a long illness during which he was nursed by a devoted wife, Sheila, and his daughter and two sons. At no time in his life was he ever happier than in their company and that of his grandchildren, and he and Sheila were a joy to visit even when he became extremely ill.

K. A. MCLAUCHLAN

Garth Barton Robinson, biochemist: born St Helena, Lancashire 1 July 1934; Lecturer, Department of Medical Biochemistry, Birmingham University 1964-65; University Lecturer, Department of Biochemistry, Oxford University 1965-96; Fellow, Hertford College, Oxford 1969-96; married 1957 Sheila Dyball (two sons, one daughter); died Oxford 8 April 1999.



Robinson: irreverent



Alfred McDermott

Liberté! Fraternité! Fromage!

A new crisis is dividing France. Cheese. In particular, the soft, smelly unpasteurised cheese of French legend. Can it kill you? Does listeria hysteria mean death to an entire culture? And how reliable is the science behind the scare? By John Lichfield

Gérard Poulard is a magician. After the main dish has been cleared away at the Montparnasse 25 restaurant, he arrives at your table like a conjuror, pushing a wheeled cabinet. From within, he produces, with a flourish, the whole of the French countryside, from Marolles in the mournful north to Roquefort in the empty, mountainous south west: a colourful and fragrant explosion of 120 to 150 kinds of French cheese.

Mr Poulard is one of the best, and certainly the most erudite and entertaining, master cheese-waiters in Paris. He will list not only the names of the cheeses but also the names of the people who make them. He will explain the season when it is best to eat a certain cheese and why. (Goats' cheese is best in spring, when the soft grass is up on the hills of Burgundy or the Auvergne; Camembert in the early summer, when the Normandy grass is at its most lush.)

This week, Mr Poulard agreed to reverse roles. I visited him at the Montparnasse 25 (among the friendliest of starred Michelin restaurants) with my own selection of cheeses: typical supermarket offerings, heat-treated, plastic-wrapped but not necessarily cheap. I wanted him to help me to understand a great gastronomic-hygienic-political debate which has been raging in the French press, and the French supermarket aisle, since the beginning of the year.

What is the definition of a genuine, and typically French, soft cheese? Can the traditional soft cheese, made with raw milk, kill you? Is the infinite variety of French cheeses – one of the great achievements of French culture – threatened with a thinning out, a dumbing down, by a conspiracy between French officialdom, the European Commission, the United States and the mass cheese-makers?

Mr Poulard cheerfully consented to try my selection. Taking a slice of one of the best-selling mass-produced, heat-treated Camemberts (President), he swung his knife gently from side to side, and then around in slow circles, as he considered its taste and texture. His face was impassive but his eyes seemed to contain a profound sadness; this was the look of a man whose suspicions had been, miserably, confirmed.

"This cheese is very interesting," he said. "For children. This is the kind of cheese that you could eat and then leave immediately for an assignation with your mistress without fear of being rejected."

"This is the perfect cheese for someone who expects to kiss someone before the night is over. In other words, this is a perfectly good and honourable cheese except that it is bland, almost odourless, almost tasteless. It is a cheese for people who don't like cheese."

Cheese is a French paradox. Here we have a country that is mocked by the clever, freedom-loving Anglo-Saxons for its statist impulses, its over-regulation, its restrictions of choice. And yet France has devised hundreds of ways of turning cows, sheep's and goats' milk into something called cheese: all different, all delicious.

Charles de Gaulle once famously said that it was impossible to govern a country with 365 different kinds of cheese. He understated the problem. There are officially recognised to be 394 types of French cheese and some obstinate "fromageologues" (cheeseologists) reckon that, taking sub-varieties into account, there are more than 1,000.

America, the home of liberty and choice, is the world's biggest cheese producer, churning out twice as much cheese as France. But can you name a single American cheese? They do exist but they tend to be rubberised, over-processed versions of European cheeses, best used as doorknobs or shock-absorbers.

Now, many French cheese traditionalists, including Mr Poulard, fear that France is heading inexorably in the same direction, or may be unless something is done. "If you look at this trolley," said Mr Poulard, "you are looking at a wonderful array of flavours, odours, soils, climates, techniques, handed down and refined over centuries. You may also be looking at a museum piece. As the law now stands, many of these cheeses are doomed to vanish."

Since 1 January of last year, EU regulations, transposed into a new French law, have made it illegal to sell a cheese that contains the merest trace of the listeria germ, which exists widely in everything around us but can cause serious food-poisoning among people with reduced resistance (the young, the elderly, the pregnant). Since 1 January of this year, any discovery of listeria in cheese has to be announced in the press and the batch in question must be withdrawn from the market.

In January there was a genuine and serious case of listeriosis in France, which killed two people, including a newborn baby who had been infected in the womb. The outbreak was traced to a factory in Burgundy making a rich, soft cheese called Epoisses. The factory – long accused by other local cheese-makers of taking short-cuts with safety methods – was closed, and 200,000 cheeses were destroyed.

The French public did not distinguish one brand of Epoisses from another. Sales of all Epoisses cheeses plunged by 70 per cent and have barely recovered three months later. The other producers – there are only half a dozen altogether – are barely surviving. Epoisses, a centuries-old cheese that was revived commercially in the Fifties, and is sometimes known as "the king of cheeses", may soon cease to exist, like some rare species of Amazonian beetle or butterfly.

Since January, there have been a series of listeria "finds" in other soft cheeses, none of which has produced sickness or death. The finds have been widely and sometimes misleadingly publicised, partly because of the incident in Burgundy, partly because of the new regulations. With each announcement, sales of the cheeses involved – St-Félicien, Morilles and unpasteurised Camembert – have plummeted.

The general impression left by these scares – despite several careful articles in the French press; less so items on television – is that there is suddenly a health problem with the traditional French soft, runny cheese made from *lait cru*, or raw, unpasteurised milk. In fact, this is the reverse of the truth: all of the cheeses in which listeria germs were found (save one, to which we will return) were heat-treated cheeses. In other words, they were more like the kinds of supermarket cheeses I brought to Mr Poulard.

And yet it is the raw-milk cheeses that are suffering in the shops. What is going on?

The traditional French soft, runny cheese is made with untreated milk, maintained at the

temperature at which it leaves the cow's udder (37°C). There is no attempt made to kill off all bacteria, since the bacteria are what makes the cheese, including the lovely, chalky white *flore* – a form of fungus – which appears naturally on the rind of many soft cheeses. There will almost certainly be listeria germs in the cheese at some stage – since listeria is everywhere – but they will be fought and defeated by other bacteria naturally occurring in the cheese. If this were not so, soft cheese would have been poisoning people for centuries.

Enormous care is, however, needed to preserve the quality of the raw milk before, and while, the cheese is made. It is impossible – or impossibly expensive – to make soft cheese with untreated milk on an industrial scale. Large manufacturers, in France as elsewhere, have therefore adopted "pasteurisation" – heating milk to 72°C or "thermisation" – which means heat treatment at 67°C.

The first destroys all the natural bacteria, good and bad, and therefore much of the variety and depth of taste. Controlled bacteria are used to make the cheese (including penicillin spray to replicate the white rind). The effect is a duller, more uniform, unsavory cheese (like the bland-but-romantic Camembert I served to Mr Poulard).

The second, less drastic heating method – which Mr Poulard approves of, within limits – allows cheese to be created in larger quantities but preserves more of its character and flavour. Almost all Camembert that advertises itself as being made with *lait cru* is in fact mildly heat-treated in this way. Put another way: the traditional, genuine,

raw-milk Camembert, which was invented by Madame Marie Harel 208 years ago, has already virtually ceased to exist.

The problem is that both forms of heat treatment also kill the natural defence bacteria in the cheese. The "processed" cheese is therefore vulnerable to listeria attack at a later stage. Supporters of the raw-milk cheese say that the conventional wisdom – pasteurised means healthy – is the reverse of the truth. The "cleaner" cheese is, the more dangerous it can become.

Almost all the cheeses that have fallen foul of the new law so far had been heat-treated in one way or another (including the rogue killer Epoisses, which was pasteurised). The one genuine raw-milk cheese to have been in trouble was a St-Félicien. When the batch was checked a second and third time, the listeria was found to have gone: destroyed by the cheese's own internal defence mechanism.

None the less, sales of St-Félicien have fallen by 70 per cent. Makers and supporters of the raw-milk cheese say that a historic and gastronomic injustice is being committed. The new regulations followed pressure from the US (which is now having second thoughts) but also lobbying by the big EU dairy companies, including French ones. The requirement for listeria-free cheese favours the pasteurised cheese-makers since, in theory, the raw and "thermised" milk cheeses are more likely to fall foul of the law.

To try to stay, even notionally, within the law, small, traditional cheese-producers are having to invest tens of thousands of pounds in new equipment. None the less, small doses of listeria will often be present – and harmlessly present – in traditional soft cheeses. The prospect of a whole series of damaging scares lies ahead. The premise – pasteurised healthy, unpasteurised dangerous – is now so deeply implanted in the public mind that few consumers, even French consumers, have noticed that it is the heat-treated cheeses that are causing the real difficulties.

The problem has been compounded by insensitive, and sometimes misleading, application of the laws by the French government machine, which is in the throes of a food-safety turf war between the ministries of agriculture and health.

Mr Poulard is not the only person to suspect an industrial "plot" to squash traditional French cheeses, which had, until now, been rapidly increasing their share of the market. This may be going a little too far. It seems more to be a case of bureaucratic heavy-handedness, compounded by misunderstanding by consumers. There is, however, a case for the EU directive, at the origin of the problem, to be urgently reviewed.

To make his case, Mr Poulard might consider sending to each member of the new European Commission a small piece of Clacibout, a goats' cheese from his trolley that we tasted after mine had been dumped in the bin. The cheese, which comes from Burgundy, resembles its homeland. On trying it, you encounter ridge after rolling ridge of taste, each as beautiful as the last.

Sad farewell to the silicone dollies

It's a disaster for womankind. Former 'Baywatch' babe Pamela Anderson has got rid of her breast implants. Why can't she leave the natural look to the rest of us? By Anita Chaudhuri

BAD NEWS for plastic surgeons. One of the industry's most alluring ambassadors has rather inconveniently gone and had her breast implants removed. Pamela Anderson, for it is she, has suddenly and inexplicably decided to embrace the "natural look".

Whether this will make some of the 8,000 women who have breast-enhancing operations in Britain each year think again, remains to be seen. "Pamela just wanted her body to go back to its natural state," commented Marleah Leslie, Anderson's official spokeswoman. "There were no problems," anxious fans were reassured.

Apparently the star has deflated from a 36D to a 36C. There was, however, no comment made on any plans to further her quest for naturalism by removing the collagen from

her lips, the bleach from her hair or the mascara from her lashes.

Since the goddess of silicone has earned untold millions from her preposterous plastic endowments, it seems a bit late in the day for her to start espousing the virtues of realism. This from the creature who made her fortune on *Baywatch* before graduating to largely non-speaking roles in action movies such as *Barb Wire* (don't worry, you didn't miss much) and *VIP*, a syndicated television detective series. Even post-*Baywatch*, her website still attracts 8 million visitors a month.

True, Anderson (who, appro-

priately enough, paid for her breast-enlargements out of her first *Playboy* fee), has not always been happy with her pneumatic shape. "When I came out of the recovery room, I said: 'Is that it?' I thought I'd be really huge, like Dolly Parton." Later she commented: "I thought an implant would give me the cleavage I wanted, but with the pain and aggravation, it was hardly worth it."

But, whatever her reasons, Anderson's decision marks a sad day for other less fantastically proportioned women. Pamela, and her synthetically enhanced sisters Caprice and Anna Nicole Smith, are strangely comforting in their

artificiality. We reassure ourselves that these women are freaks, Frankenstein's monsters created by silicone sorcerers. We wouldn't want to look that way, not if you paid us. After all, we reason, if only we too had a spare \$2,500 (the sum Anderson spent on her breasts), we could easily look just like that. Since we

can't compete with their pneumatic bulges, we can just forget about them and go back to munching our Pop Tarts.

Silicone falsies are a blessing for womankind. Women like Pamela Anderson and Anna Nicole Smith look so plastic and pumped up that men can safely fantasise about them without being any more unfaithful than if they were drooling over a rubber doll. To prove the

point, Anderson once appeared for the cameras in a spray-on rubber leotard and thigh-high pin-heel boots, observed by her proud husband as though she were a performing seal.

This version of womanhood is unreal, so real men need not engage with it. Of course, there are men whose image of themselves works better when pumped up. Sylvester Stallone reportedly burst into the operating theatre when his girlfriend, Angie Everhart, was about to undergo breast-enhancing surgery and persuaded the surgeon to make them even bigger than she wanted. Why, Sly must have been amazed when she came

round from the operation and wasn't very happy about it. Sarah Grogan, a psychologist and author of *Body Image*, a study of body dissatisfaction among men, women and children, agrees that Anderson is an archetypal fantasy figure whom men respond to in a way that women don't.

"Men tend to prefer slenderness with largish breasts and this presents a conflict for women who wish to be attractive to men. Media images of women's bodies aimed at a male audience often present an unusual slim-hipped, long-legged, large-breasted ideal. Pamela Anderson is a good example. This ideal is possible for

most women only through a mixture of diet, exercise and plastic surgery."

In her study, Grogan asked 200 students aged between 16 and 48, who they would most like to look like. Cindy Crawford scored high among twenty-something women, while Michelle Pfeiffer got 13 per cent of the thirtysomethings' vote. Tellingly, no one mentioned poor Pamela.

Now all that may change. The last thing on earth that we want is for these women to look the way nature intended them to. Overnight our snide comments, of the "nothing but a plastic doll, men are mad to find that attractive" variety, must come to an abrupt halt. Now the Barbie brigade want to throw out the glamour and look like the rest of us. The sickening thing is, they may still look fantastic.

SCIENCE

Small, deadly, likes to travel

An age-old pig virus in Malaysia has begun killing humans. So what has provoked it to jump species now? By Charles Arthur

Killing pigs in a pen may sound like a piece of simile, akin to shooting fish in a barrel. Except that in Malaysia and Singapore, killing pigs has become a necessary precaution to try to stop people dying. So far, the Malaysian army has killed almost 800,000 pigs as part of an eradication programme that takes in 1.2 million animals nationally.

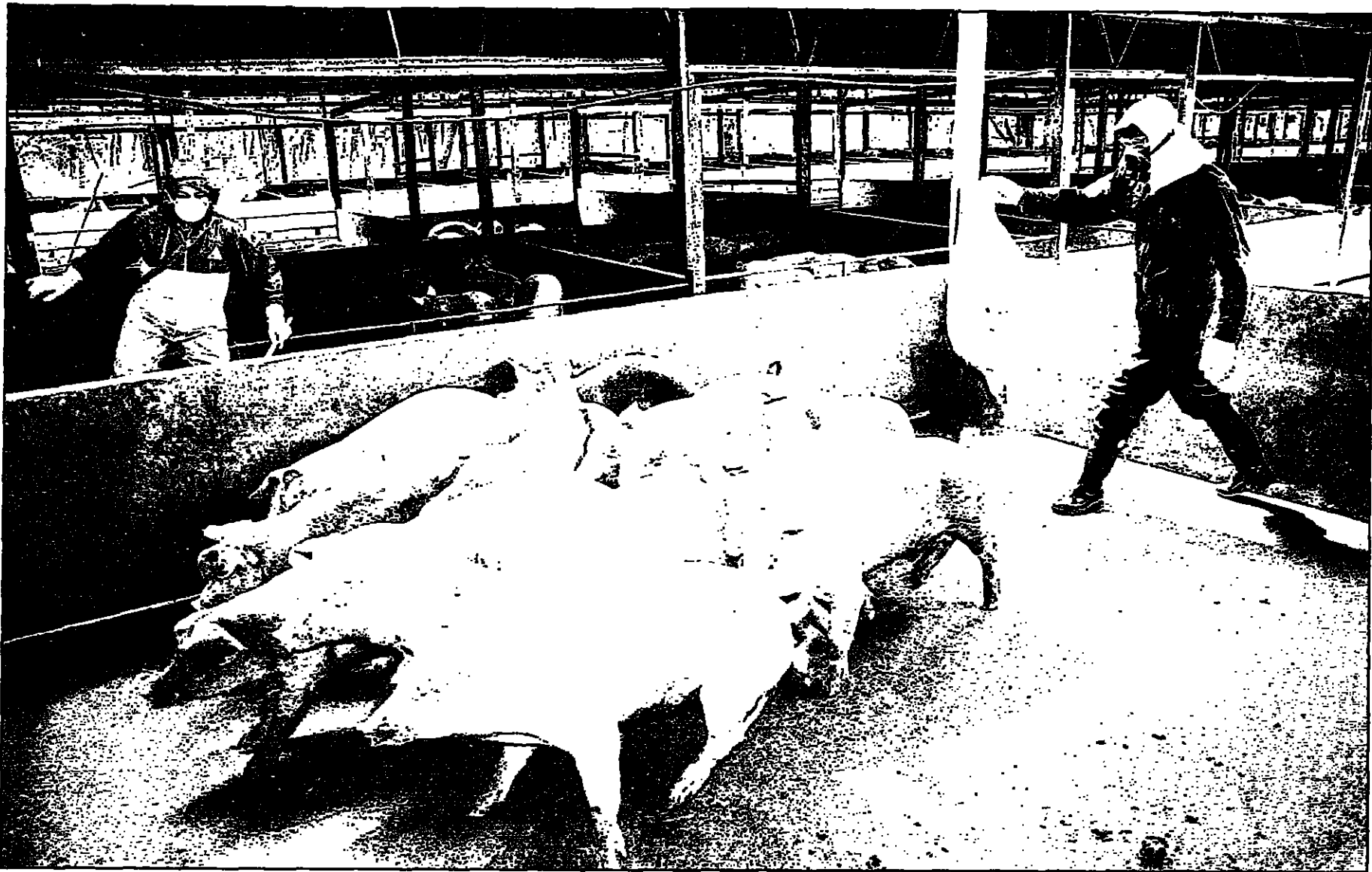
The aim is to prevent the human death toll - 117 since 29 September - from mounting further. The cause is what the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta calls "a virus that is not like any we have ever seen before".

As with so many before it, the cause of the outbreak is a zoonosis - a disease passed from animals to humans. Zoonoses include the most deadly illnesses known to humans, a roll-call including Aids, the Black Death and the Ebola virus, to name only the most famous.

So does that mean that the new virus causing the deaths in Malaysia is equally deadly? So far, the answer seems to be no. Though the CDC is still studying it, it appears that human beings are, in the scientific term, a "dead-end host" for the virus - that is, it is not transmitted between people. (Unfortunately, the use of this term early in the outbreak of mad cow disease, or BSE, when cattle were termed dead-end hosts, led people to conclude, wrongly, that BSE could not be transmitted to people. Though it is not caused by a virus, BSE is a zoonosis.)

What intrigues scientists is why a virus will emerge from an animal carrier - known as a "reservoir" - to infect a human being at one time rather than another, and, more importantly, working out a way to predict or measure the likelihood of people infected with the virus then passing it on to others.

The Malaysian virus, dubbed "Nipah" (pronounced "nee-pa") after a badly affected pig-rearing village where it was first detected, is related, but not identical, to the Hendra virus. That was identified only in 1994, when an outbreak in Australia led to the death of 13 racehorses and a trainer. In both cases, the reservoir is thought to be fruit bats, but the entire genetic blueprint (genome) of Nipah differs from that of Hendra by about 20 per cent. "It is quite different from the Hen-



So far, the Malaysian army has killed 800,000 pigs in an attempt to eradicate the 'Nipah' virus

Vincent Thion/AP

dra virus," says Dr Brian Mahy, director of the division of viral and rickettsial diseases at the CDC. "So we have to assume that if it has been in a reservoir, then it has been there a long time."

Dr Mahy is one of the CDC team who are investigating the new virus, having been called in by the Malaysian government three weeks ago. They have already established that it affects not just human beings and pigs, but also dogs and goats: a dog was found dying from the infection. That fact alone makes the virus remarkable. "Infecting several different species is unusual; we don't see many that do that," he says. Even so, the likelihood is that

since Nipah is so different from Hendra it must be very old, so people must have fallen ill with it in the past, according to David Onions, one of Britain's leading experts on zoonoses, who has spoken to the CDC team. "It has probably occurred before," he says, "but hasn't been noticed."

Indeed, zoonoses are nothing new. Ever since humans began domesticating animals such as cattle and dogs thousands of years ago, viruses have had increased opportunities to jump from one species of host to another. In many cases they cannot do so, or our defences fight them off easily. But in a few cases the reservoir animals (which

may not even develop symptoms) can pass on viruses that acquire lethal effect in human beings.

Research published earlier this year showed that HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus that leads to Aids, has for thousands of years crossed and re-crossed between humans and primates where it exists as SIV, simian immunodeficiency virus, in the central African jungles. The critical difference is that in this century international travel has allowed viruses to spread rapidly around the globe. In addition, rising populations have put increasing pressure on people in the Third World to encroach on tropical forests. This has inevitably

brought them closer to the viruses of wild animals.

"There are two kinds of zoonosis," explains Professor Onions. "The first is where the human is a dead-end host - an infected person cannot pass it on to another. The worrying other kind is where we can transmit it to other people. If you want a nightmare scenario, and for some reason some people do, the most dangerous kind of zoonosis would be from somebody going on an exotic holiday, catching a new disease with a long incubation period, and then becoming a blood donor. However, it is not very likely." Other examples of zoonoses include influenza, in which the more

virulent forms (including the one that swept Britain earlier this year) often result from a "recombination", or mixing, of the virus genome within the reservoir population. "The thing about the influenza virus is that it has a segmented genome," says Dr Mahy. "It is broken up into eight parts, which can recombine in different orders in the reservoir animal to give more or less virulent forms. We can then catch it back, as in the case of 'Asian flu'."

Pigs are almost the ideal host for viruses on the path towards zoonosis; they have many human-like characteristics, and even at the genetic level they share with human beings some strong similarities in

their immune system. "They have [cell] receptors for both bird and human viruses," explains Dr Mahy.

Professor Onions points out that certain types of virus are well-adapted to changing or mutating rapidly, notably those that use RNA - a close cousin of DNA - as their genetic material. "The RNA viruses will change about one in every 10,000 nucleotides each time they reproduce. They also recombine very frequently. For flu (an RNA virus), pigs act like a mixing vessel for producing new forms of a virus."

The phrase for this phase is "amplification", having recombined, the virus can then pass between different animals, until its infectivity and virulence are sufficient for it to make the hop to a new species, whose cell receptors and machinery will differ in various ways from their existing host. The crucial question then becomes: how effectively can the newly infected human being's immune system cope with the threat from this new invader?

In the case of Nipah, those who have so far died or been infected have all been adult men who were in close contact with pigs. It has also infected 11 abattoir workers in Singapore - all of whom had handled imported pig meat from Malaysia. Killing the pigs is thus seen as the simplest means of wiping out the infection - even though the primary reservoir is the fruit bat.

Zoonoses often have serious knock-on effects besides the illnesses they cause; the Nipah epidemic has wrecked Malaysia's £250m pork trade, and hit the tourism industry - though the CDC advises that visitors are unlikely to be endangered as long as they stay away from pig-breeding regions.

But what about the future? Should we expect more deadly zoonoses to spring up as international travel comes to more and more countries, and humans push further into previously untouched jungle, and live closer to animals?

"The idea of zoonosis is a very anthropomorphic view of life," says Professor Onions. "There are diseases that pass from cattle to sheep; there are some that pass from humans to animals. There's a tendency to think that what happens to us is special. But from an evolutionary viewpoint there's nothing special about this time. The fact is that most diseases we see now were probably zoonoses at some stage in their development - and we're still here."

Scientists need to learn the ethics of science

WHY IS fraud in science receiving so much attention?

I am not alone in having published results that later turned out to be wrong. It happens all the time, not only among lowly biologists but even among the high priests of particle physics. It is in the very nature of science that if there is error, it is corrected by the community. Any paper that makes a significant contribution will be checked by others when they make use of the results, and it is rare in the extreme for any one set of results to dominate a field.

Science progresses slowly by a remodelling of knowledge. While error can be disruptive in the short run, in the long term it is irrelevant; more than a million articles are published in scientific journals each year, but many are never quoted again and very few have a lifetime of more than 10 years in which they are repeatedly referred to.

While it is the ultimate corruption of the scientific endeavour to fabricate results, the effect on the progress of science is much less serious than might be thought - but it does undermine public confidence.

The current intense concerns about fraud come from Germany, where a young research worker has exposed one of the biggest cases in Europe. Germany had apparently thought it was immune from what it saw as an American scourge, because the incentive in the US to publish papers in order to advance your career is so strong.

The case involved two cancer research workers who had published widely, but 47 of their



LEWIS WOLPERT

papers were under suspicion. It is greatly to the credit of the young scientist that he exposed the fraud. It is usually the young who spot it - they are working at the bench and see what is recorded and published - but it can be difficult to point a finger at your superiors, in science or any other field.

In this case the young man was helped by his former supervisor, at another institute. Should all institutes have some sort of ombudsman to whom young workers can go?

Sometimes there is the conviction that the scientist knows the right result, and although the results do not fit, they eventually will. The first report that mice had been cloned by the transfer of nuclei from embryonic cells was treated with suspicion when it was published, as long ago as 1981, and was then exposed by a student in the laboratory as a fraud. The scientist lost his job, but in the very same issue of *Nature* that carries a detailed analysis of fraud he writes a letter claiming that, since mice have recently been cloned, his original report was true. Conviction can distort thinking. Indeed in many

scientific papers there is a temptation to massage the results, to put them in the best light and to exclude results that do not fit. A famous case is that of a scientist who earned a Nobel prize for his work on the charge on the electron - and when his laboratory notebooks were analysed it was found that he had discarded those results he did not like. He turned out to be right, but he was wrong not to report the anomalous results.

Another case involved a technician who, rather than tell his demanding boss that the cells he was culturing had stopped growing, renewed the cultures each time and so encouraged to the false idea, widely propagated in the Fifties, that cells could multiply indefinitely. Many scientific groups are now rather large, more than 30 workers, and this can make it difficult for the head of the group to keep track. Leroy Hood, a leading American molecular biologist, has described the discovery of fraud in his laboratory as the most difficult experience of his career. The rationalisation given for one of those involved was that he knew the answer. Another said he took a short cut, as he did not want to run the control again.

In order to avoid such cases in future, Hood sits down and talks to those who have come to work with him and explains about the pressures to succeed and the temptations of fraud.

It seems a good way forward. Perhaps scientists need training in the ethics of science.

The writer is professor of biology as applied to medicine at University College London

I think therefore I paint

Artists' thought processes, as well as the way they move their eyes and hands, are quite different from those of the rest of us. By Steve Connor

ARTISTS THROUGHOUT history have had a reputation for being unconventional. Now science seems to support this prejudice. A study of the way artists draw objects has shown that they really do use their bodies differently from the rest of us.

John Tehalenko, a former lecturer at Imperial College in London, has carried out the first detailed research into the movements and thought processes that underpin the way artists create impressions of the world they see. His results show that when it comes to drawing a picture, artists call upon quite novel ways of co-ordinating their hands, eyes and brains.

Dr Tehalenko approached the task with the help of two techniques and a long-time friend the artist Humphrey Ocean. He used a device called an eye-tracker, which was able to plot the precise movements of Ocean's eyes as he drew a portrait. The second approach was to employ a brain-scanner to discover which parts of Ocean's brain became active during a drawing exercise.

"I'm interested in creativity, and the way that the visual input is transformed into the manual input - therein lies the creative process," Dr Tehalenko says.

Ocean was asked to draw a portrait while wearing the eye-tracker device - which looks like a bicycle helmet attached to space-age goggles - at the Sensorimotor Control Laboratory at Oxford University. Ocean wore the device for about 12 minutes at a time. A sensor recorded his hand movements, and how these were co-ordinated with the exact motions of his eyes. A non-artist carried out the same tasks for comparison.

Most people's eyes are continuously moving in their sockets, at a rate of about 140 flickers a minute, in order constantly to shift the scene they are viewing over the central - and most sensitive - part of the retina. When non-artists were placed in the eye-tracker and asked to draw a face, they continued to follow this pattern, fixing their eyes on a particular spot on the face for about one third of a second.



Portraits by the artist: the efforts of the painter Humphrey Ocean revealed the distinctive qualities of his brain activity

ously moving in their sockets, at a rate of about 140 flickers a minute, in order constantly to shift the scene they are viewing over the central - and most sensitive - part of the retina. When non-artists were placed in the eye-tracker and asked to draw a face, they continued to follow this pattern, fixing their eyes on a particular spot on the face for about one third of a second.

Ocean's eye movements during drawing, however, were significantly different. From a fixation rate of 140 a minute he went down to about 10 or 12 fixations, each one lasting, of course, considerably longer. His eye movements over the

face of the subject were also less erratic and more controlled. Ocean was moving his gaze at a speed estimated to be about 40km per second and he was able to fix his interest on a spot on the face with pinpoint accuracy - whereas the non-artist's gaze wandered all over the subject.

"It shows that an artist looks at a face methodically," Dr Tehalenko says. Ocean's hand movements were also significantly different from those of a non-artist. Ocean would move his hand several times over the paper before committing himself to drawing a line. It was as if he were rehearsing his actions.

The next phase of the study was to see how Ocean's brain was working during the drawing process. For this, he was placed in a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanner at Stanford University in California. While lying in the scanner, Ocean was asked to draw portraits from six photographs, and six geometric figures. Subtracting the brain activity used in one activity from that used in the other should yield the mental activity needed to portray a face. The results show a clear difference from the way non-artists draw faces.

The visual information from the eye enters the visual centres at the back of the brain in both artists and non-artists, and then travels forward to the frontal areas of the cerebral cortex - the "higher" centres, which are involved in more abstract thought processes.

"In Humphrey's case, activation occurred in the right frontal region of the brain, whereas in the non-artist controls it occurred in the posterior region. It appears that Humphrey was 'thinking' the portraits, while the controls were slavishly copying them," Dr Tehalenko says.

The study, which is described in an exhibition opening today at the National Portrait Gallery in London, clearly indicates that artists have learnt to use their brains, as well as their hands and eyes, quite differently from the rest of us. Dr Tehalenko says that the next step in the research would be to see how art students learn this skill over a period of years.

The *Painter's Eye*, sponsored by the Wellcome Trust, can be seen at the National Portrait Gallery, London from today. Admission is free

Oh, what a lovely carve up!

Michael Kaiser, executive director of the Royal Opera House, had a typically neat diplomatic turn of phrase when I asked him about the infamous "dropping" of the ballerina Viviana Durante by Bruce Sansom in a rehearsal, which led to a bout of bad relations between Miss Durante and the company. "He did not drop her," Mr. Kaiser replied sternly. "He put her down with

TateGallery[illegible]

MUSIC

Pills, thrills and tax bills

The Happy Mondays are back and about to hit the road. A cynical Madchester cash-in? Not at all, says Shaun Ryder, it's just that it's taken everyone else 10 years to catch up with us. (OK, yeah... we need the money.) By Fiona Sturges

The first thing that you notice about Shaun Ryder is how people around him perk up. The rest of the band had been ruefully nursing colds with bottles of beer throughout their rehearsal, but following his entrance they were cackling at one another and planning the evening's entertainment. It is as if the birthday boy has finally arrived at the party.

What's more, he looks distinctly cheerful, bounding into the frame for the first round of photographs and warmly hugging his friends. This is not the snarling villain that I had expected to encounter. This man looks... well, straight.

"I am," he says, beaming. "Look, I can prove it."

Ryder pulls up his shirt and thrusts a great white belly in my direction. "Can you see the marks?" he says, pointing just beneath his bellybutton. Marks? "The marks from my implants." I beg your pardon?

"They put implants in my stomach so that if I have any opiates I get sick. Instant cold turkey," he explains. After a couple of months they wear off so I've had 12 months' worth put in. I don't get a craving or anything. I'm just a pisshead now."

After 15 years of heroin abuse, the frontman of the Happy Mondays has lost count of how many times he has been in rehab, though he insists that his brother, Paul, and drummer Gaz Whelan have suffered most since the Mondays broke up. The younger Ryder has had two nervous breakdowns since 1993 while Whelan has undergone prolonged treatment for "stress-related" complaints.

I approached this interview with some trepidation. The Happy Mondays always knew how to make journalists sweat. They were behaving badly long before style mags made it OK for boys to behave badly. They make the boorish conduct of fellow Mancunians Oasis seem pitifully small beer.

"Usually, we bring the band to London," says their PR. "That way, they are easier to control." This doesn't bode well seeing as I'm interviewing them at their Stockport rehearsal studio. Worse still, their last interview - to which they arrived 24 hours late - saw Ryder in a semi-comatose state and sporadically forgetting his whereabouts.

Today though, Ryder is razor-sharp. In fact, he is unstoppable. "I've written a movie called *Molly's Idle Ways* which is going into production next month," he boasts, adopting a faux-posh accent. "I'm acting, doing a bit of music and helping with the directing. I'm doing the tour with the Happy Mondays and a column in *The Sport*. Oh, and I've just got divorced."

Ryder's divorce is crucial to today's assembly of people. That and "a fucking great tax bill". A messy split with Oriel Letch, daughter of Sixties folk veteran Donovan,



Ryder has had implants put in his stomach to help him stay off heroin. 'If I have any opiates, I get sick. Instant cold turkey'

Martin Rickett

has left Ryder with no house and thousands of pounds in bills. Then came the tax bill. "It's fuckin' cleaned me out," he cries. Consequently, when "some daft sod" suggested that Ryder start up the Happy Mondays again, it was an offer that he couldn't refuse.

Four of the old members - the Ryder brothers, Whelan, plus their maraca-wielding mascot Bez - are back in the fold, though original guitarist Mark Day and keyboardist Paul Davis are conspicuous absentees. New recruits include Black Grape's Paul Wastaff, keyboardist Ben Leach (ex-The Farm) and a softly spoken singer known simply as Nuts. Just three weeks away from the beginning of the tour, the band are still trying to track down lost samples, rearrange old tracks and re-learn some of the 15-year-old songs. In short, it's a revival.

We are disrupted by a commotion at the door and Bez's distinctive vowel sounds. "Can anyone give us a tinner for a cab?" The atmosphere in the studio becomes even more excitable as Bez shows off his Adidas-sponsored threads to his pals.

In his teens Bez, aka Mark Berry, says he was "robbing, partying and being a general pain in the arse". It wasn't until he met Ryder in the mid-Eighties that he became Bez and mutated into the hyperactive cartoon dancer whose pendulous elbows, knock knees and boggle eyes became the band's trademark. Bez was also the last to rejoin the band. Word has it that it took over £50,000 to twist his arm. "Jobseeker's Allowance was on me case trying to get me to do some warehouse work," he explains. "Shifting boxes of beans or something, so I thought 'I'd bet-

ter do the Mondays thing instead'."

The Happy Mondays embraced the drug-addled euphoria of the late-Eighties and were the first band to successfully put dance music in the live arena. Their rough-edged funk and infectious house rhythms, at their best on their 1990 album *Pills, Thrills and Bellyaches*, brought swaths of devout rockers into the rave scene. Tony Wilson, the band's label boss, even claimed that Ryder was the most important poet since Keats. While that point is debatable, it was certainly down to the Happy Mondays that Manchester was baptised "Madchester", with the first of the "superclubs", the Hacienda, becoming their hallowed playground.

They also came equipped with a colourful history. Stories of racketeering, spells in prison and a Herculean drug intake cir-

culated during the band's heyday in the late-Eighties, mostly spread by the members themselves. This is the band that boasted to the press about their gangster connections and bought instruments with money earned from selling drugs.

Why did they start the Mondays in the first place?

"We needed something to do in the afternoon," explains Ryder. "We found an opportunity to get into the music business and it seemed a good way to have a laugh. If we could possibly make a decent tune while we were doing it, then cool."

Even with their debauched lifestyles, the Happy Mondays were hailed as working-class heroes, lovable hooligans who could do no wrong. Their drug habits were seen as essential to their art. It was Bez's ill-judged comments about homosexual-

ity that first turned the tide of public opinion against them, though he cites other causes.

"It became a nasty little business operation, something had to give, somewhere." Meltdown finally occurred in 1992 with an ill-fated trip to Barbados where the band were recording a new album, *Yes Please*. Ryder, already battling with his heroin dependency, descended into full-blown crack addiction and took to selling pieces of their recording equipment for instant cash. The subsequent album was received so disastrously that the band's label, Factory Records, filed for bankruptcy. After a similarly catastrophic tour in 1993, the band went their separate ways.

With their legendary status as drug-users, gangsters and all-round bad boys, the Happy Mondays are perhaps the least likely candidates to join the cavalcade of comebacks. So far, revival tours from such Eighties luminaries as Culture Club, ABC, and the Human League were little more than cabaret acts. And even in the age of compulsory retro, we would be hard put to feel nostalgic over a band that still get played on the radio.

"Yeah, but this is different," says Ryder. Why?

"Cos we were 10 years ahead of our time. Everyone else is up to speed, now."

He has a point. The Happy Mondays blurred the boundaries between rock and dance long before The Chemical Brothers turned dance tunes into rock anthems. *Pills, Thrills and Bellyaches* emerged three years before Primal Scream's *Screamadelica*, often cited as the most important rock-dance album of the Nineties. The Mondays were also one of the first live dance bands to reach *Top Of The Tops*.

Ryder is keen to point out that they are not just recycling old material. "We're using some of the remixes we did in the late-Eighties, but we are doing lots of new ones. We've got a new single coming out and we've also got Nuts in to do some singing to make it more interesting."

Another album? "If we do another one, there will be a different set of rules, such as everyone gets out of the way and lets me get on with it."

This is the first glimpse that I have had of the old Ryder - stubborn and impossibly egotistical. But these aren't the Happy Mondays that we used to know. These are the rehabilitated, reconstructed version, out to make a fast buck before retiring to nice houses in Manchester's suburbs. This isn't the Happy Mondays, this is a business opportunity. And a sure-fire one at that.

The Happy Mondays play Hereford Leisure Centre on 21 April; Manchester Evening News Arena, 23 April; Glasgow SECC 24, 25 April; Brixton Academy 27, 28, 29 April

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LYRIC SHEETS

MARTIN NEWELL

The US military recently requested permission to use Blur's 'Song 2' to unveil their latest 'stealth' bomber but were turned down by the band. The song has given Blur their biggest US hit to date and was recently used in an episode of *The Simpsons*



Song 2 / Wah-Hoo

But seriously, What do you say The day the Pentagon phones up To say they like the vibrant sound Of some song on your last CD And do you think there's any way, (a pause for breath here and a comma) That they could use this groovy tune To help unveil their latest bomber?

D'you ask, "Which aeroplane is that then? Could it be the one we saw In big dark pieces on the floor A handsome woman dancing on As if it were some hootenanny A local village christening feast Where life continued as before And not the outset of a war?"

Or do you ask, "Which song is that then?" And make the six-star general sing The main riff down the phone at you And get him to re-sing, "Wah-hoo!" Until you're sick from giggling And say it's not a disc you made And is he absolutely sure? Then pass him on to Pulp or Suede?

Or do you say, "How much then, mush, To advertise this piece of kit?" Vorsprung durch technik on the base Vorsprung zu chetnik in this case But teething troubles put aside A Pentagon/Pop Interface... How far d'you think the thing might go? Not very far boys. Just say no.

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THE BIG NOISE

TOM WAITS
Mule Variations Epitaph

ON HIS first album in seven years, Tom Waits surrounds himself with blues players – the guitarist John Hammond Jr, the blues-harpist Charlie Musselwhite, the former Canned Heat bassist Larry Taylor – and gets back to the land. *Mule Variations* is a Route 66 record in a freeway world, intent on summoning the ghosts of a disappearing rural past, replete with their local mythologies and suspicions. It generally proceeds at a slower pace than we're used to travelling in today's shiny pop vehicles, and the chrome is heavily pockmarked with the tarnish of generations past.

At times the sense of decay is so palpable, you wonder whether your CD player should be fitted with a cat's whisker. But for all its lovingly distressed antiquity, it retains more life than the average shopping mall, inhabited as it is by the characterful hobos of "Pony" and "Cold Water", and carry geeks such as the "Eyeball Kid", a monocular monstrosity who "came down to teach us how to really see". The cranky, croaky blues "Get Behind the Mule" is the pivotal piece, an evocation of rural unease populated by such as Beaula, Beatty, Jack the Cutter and Jimmy the Harp. "Got to get behind the mule in the morning and plow," Waits recommends as Musselwhite's harp

walls low in the distance, before going on to offer more cryptic (and less useful) advice along the lines of "Pin your ear to the wisdom post, pin your eye to the line".

There's a convincing tang of country apocrypha about the song, a blend of the surreal and rural which Waits himself has tagged "Surreal".

It's present, too, in pieces like "Lowside of the Road", where bespoke percussion instruments such as the chumbus and the dousengoni (who knows?) scatter potholes of awkward rhythm in the song's path, forcing it across from the sunny side of the street; and in the bizarre theological confection "Chocolate Jesus", which, recorded

al fresco, includes a faint cock-crow, like a watermark of rural authenticity.

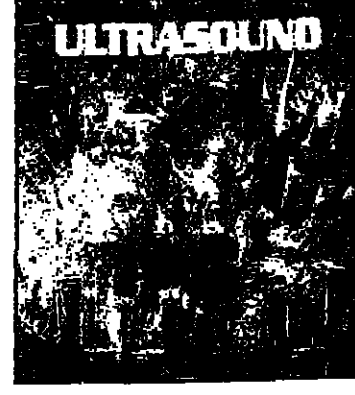
Alongside these windblown, weatherbeaten husks are songs that hark back to other Waits compositions – "Hold On" is a first cousin to "Downtrain Train", "Cold Water" a less sentimental "On the Nickel". But they're set seamlessly within the flow of the album, like familiar footmarks to help listeners through a path overgrown with weeds. The result is another landmark album from one of modern music's most valuable talents – a man who, like the lover in "Black Market Baby", is "a diamond that wants to stay coal".

CATATONIA
Equally Cursed and Blessed
Blanco y Negro

CERY MATTHEWS has the kind of voice you either love or hate, and for me her Olive Oyl-with-attitude whine is, I admit, the closest thing to nails scraping down a blackboard. Perhaps that's what they mean by *Equally Cursed and Blessed*: they run the risk of her idiosyncratic voice repulsing potential listeners, but without it, well, they're pretty much indistinguishable from the multitude of lower-division indie Brit-poppers. It's touch and go whether last season's promotion run can be sustained another year, for this is a very dull record, its bland mélange of organ, guitar and electric piano straining to cover all available bases, but with little distinction. The stridency of the Eartha Kitt of the Valleys is softened by the inclusion of strings on some tracks, but there's little improvement in the Catatonia compositional style: the album is so freighted with terrible puns, it's sometimes hard to tell if these are songs at all. "Make hay not war"; "custard's last stand"; "London never sleeps, it just sucks"; "Her treasured chest was sunken". It's like hearing tracks entirely composed of NME headlines.

TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS
Echo
Warner Bros

"IT'S THE same as the same sad echo as before," sings Tom Petty on the title track of this latest collection, his first since the *She's the One* soundtrack from 1996. He's not wrong, either, there's something warm and comforting about Petty's wry melancholy, one of rock's most dependable attitudes. The album marks a return to his forte of songs which, like the album logo, look both ways at once. Whether he's tempering a tale of struggle with a laconic aside like "She went down swinging" like Glenn Miller, or balancing the benefits of extroversion and isolation in "Room At The Top", he has the uncanny ability to sketch both sides of a story or sentiment, with enviable equanimity. He's particularly adept at conveying the cyclical nature of emotions, as in both "Echo" and the admirably upbeat depression song "Won't Last Long". The Heartbreakers are as reliably modest as ever, save for the occasional Mike Campbell solo like the dervish guitar fill in "Room At The Top". All in all, Petty's best since he joined Warner's.

ULTRASOUND
Everything Picture
Nude

SOMETIMES SIZE isn't everything, particularly when it takes a band 88 minutes to traverse a mere 11 songs. Last year's next big thing, Ultrasound have finally got around to releasing their debut album at least six months too late, and as if to compensate for having gone well beyond their sell-by date, they've made possibly this year's most irritating package – from the ugly sleeve that confounds one's attempts to extricate the two CDs, to Tiny Wood's grandiose whine, the title track's laughably "climactic" 20-minute noise-scape, lyrics which depict rock'n'roll in terms of "naked pagan glory", and pervasive melotronic strings which summon hideous ghosts of early King Crimson and ELP (not heretofore regarded as particularly naked, pagan or glorious). For all their vaunting ambition and glam aspirations – trying to grasp the fluttering coat-tails of Suede and Pulp, perhaps? – Ultrasound's music is little more than pomp-rock stodge with eyeliner, and as one horribly over-egged pudding of a song follows another, one can't help but fret over the future of British pop. Is this all there is?

ADD N TO (X)
Avant Hard
Mute

ADD N TO (X), it's claimed, take their name from a computer command that "creates an unknown third electronic force", whatever that means. Certainly, this second album shows them to be excessively smitten by the quasi-futurist allure of analogue synthesizers, which they wield with scant regard for either fun or fashion. It's a noisy job, but someone's got to do it. They're not, however, as pointlessly purist as some of their peers: rather than rely solely on electronically generated rhythms, breakbeats abound beneath juddering electric motors such as "FYUZ" and the single "Metal Fingers in My Body". They're not averse to the odd sample staining their shapely sine-waves either, most intriguingly on "Am's Eveready Equestrian". Elsewhere, the cacophonous "Revenge of the Black Regent" grows from glacial tones into a stately military tattoo, while "Buckminster Fuller" sounds like an explosion in a siren factory. The fey female vocals soften their impact, in kitsch Stereolab style, but there seems little place for fleshy folk. The machines appear to be enjoying themselves, though.

B is for Bunnymen... and Bacharach

THE NEW Echo & The Bunnymen album is a brave move forward, a disavowal of the band's grand past for simple statements of ageing and regret. Unfortunately, they have also abandoned rock'n'roll in favour of pretty but unthrilling Bacharachian pop that suits the singer Ian McCulloch's increasing desire to croon like Sinatra. But it ignores his band's greatest achievement, in their unlikely comeback two years ago – their honing of songs old and new during relentless touring, till

the Bunnymen who blinked back into the spotlight at Cream in 1997 had achieved a force and majesty live which few could equal. The difference between a drunk McCulloch debuting the new album's title song, "What Are You Going to Do with Your Life?", as a taunting accusation to his thirtysomething crowd at their last headline show a year ago, and its mood of middle-aged acceptance on record, tells a disappointing story. The quiet retirement of the bassist Les Pat-

tinson between tours, leaving only McCulloch and Will Sergeant, invites a further question. Are Echo & The Bunnymen really still a band – or the name that ritually validates McCulloch, the Voice?

LIVE
ECHO AND THE
BUNNYMEN
MAYFAIR
NEWCASTLE

When they take to the stage, cruising on the crowd's good humour after the Newcastle FA Cup semi-final win earlier, such worries at first seem ill-founded. McCulloch swags into view from a swirl of dry ice, with ash hanging delicately from a cigarette, swathed in shiny black leather, more the perfect rock star than he's ever been before. Will Sergeant strums on his left, hidden by his fringe, and who cares? Snake-dancing and sneaking drinks from the crowd, McCulloch's recent claim

that he is the Bunnymen seems less a boast than a lucky fact. He homes in on established hits. The crowd, almost all old enough to remember the Bunnymen's heyday, danced the way they are supposed to, and watch the band do their memories justice. By "Bring On the Dancing Horses", the crowd are hurling the lyrics back, rolling back the years. The potency of the old songs seems freeze-dried. But of course, for any man who believes in his future, that can never be enough.

The crunch for McCulloch comes when "The Back of Love" is followed by that crucial new song, "What Are You Going to Do With Your Life?". He sings the old song with a voice deliberately ragged, bringing one of his finest hits into his new, soft-focused world. For "What Are You Going to Do...", as when he first sang it so angrily, the audience's age should make it resonate. But somehow, the transition to this brave new Bunnymen's world falls short.

NICK HASTED McCulloch: brave move forward



simply irresistible



Robert Palmer 'rhythm & blues'

Never content to rest on his laurels, Palmer has gone back to his soul roots to produce this exploration of Rhythm and Blues. From ageless gritty funk to his own sophisticated rhythms, Palmer's own compositions sit comfortably beside a stunning interpretation of Marvin Gaye's 'Let's Get It On'.



MEGASTORES

Dark side of the moon

Luna make beautiful but disturbing records. But luck isn't on their side. Elektra have dropped their latest album in the States. And now they risk being upstaged by Sheryl Crow... By Kevin Harley

GOOD LUCK seems to elude Luna. Formed by Dean Wareham when he deserted the gorgeous Galaxie 500 in 1991, the New York four-piece have spread their vapour trails of spiky-sweet guitar pop and Velvets-styled sonic fidgeting across five albums already. Even so, they're still best known for their insistent cover version of Serge Gainsbourg's "Bonnie and Clyde", released back in 1995.

A tale of woe spins out from another Luna cover version. Like alchemists, they've turned the paunchy rock squeal of Guns n' Roses' "Sweet Child O'Mine" into a lightly sozzled dance track kept standing by a big drum.

Luna recorded it for a B-side, but their US label, Elektra, insisted that they put it on their new, fifth album, *Days of Our Nights*.

"Now they're not even putting our album out," Wareham spits. "Dropped, man! They said it's 'not commercially viable'. We wanted out of Elektra a while ago, partly because of this mountain of fake debt that they slapped on us. And it is fake! But the timing is bad because we'd serviced the album to the press."

It isn't Wareham's first acrimonious break-up, given that his split from Galaxie 500 was not exactly amicable. These days he communicates only by fax with his former colleagues Damon Krukowski and Naomi Yang.

"They think I ruined their lives because of ego and money," he sneers, before adding wistfully, "It may have been ego. It certainly wasn't money."

Despite jokingly basing their latest album's title on a soap opera, Luna's tensions seem to stay in the music. Their slow-burning, quintessentially New York brand of quiet melodrama fine-tunes that seductive,



Luna: the best unknown band on Earth

haunting clash between nimble surfaces and vivid instrumentation. Even a lucid wisp of a song such as "Seven Steps to Satan" cloaks the unholy coupling of a wah guitar with a digital Talkbox. Elsewhere, a choir haunts Wareham's ghostly croon thanks to the bassist, multi-instrumentalist and ex-Chills man Justin Harwood.

"Justin played the choir with his finger," Dean deadpans. "It's a sample."

Likewise, poking into Wareham's opaque lyrics can be like finding acid in your ice-cream. What sound like prisms for benevolent and gauche fragments – a quote

from a Dean Martin biography, a bit of trucker-speak, a nod to the adolescent Seventies comic-strip darlings Betty and Veronica, in "The Rustler" – often lead into tales of stalking, crazy cults, nervous breakdowns and pancake houses. Using Wareham's words, they're "softly spoken tigers". Beautiful, but prone to such casually catty swipes as "my friends all make me sick". "Superfreaky Memories", the first single, is exemplary. "The title comes from a letter this killer got from his girlfriend when he was in jail for a killing spree in Utah in the 1970s. He wanted to be exe-

cuted and he wanted her to die too, but she didn't. I hope she doesn't come after us!"

It isn't much of a worry, given Luna's bittersweet position as, in the words of *Rolling Stone*, "the best band in the world that no one has ever heard of".

Still, Wareham's quirky lyrics do boast a bundle of nascent neuroses. When his band mate Sean Eden needles him about being a hypochondriac, you wonder whether Woody Allen could have turned out like Wareham, had he nurtured a Lou Reed fixation and a smoulder to match. "I am not a hypochondriac," Wareham says, tetchily, "I just don't like being near sick people when we're out on tour."

His paranoia is understandable, given the misfortunes heaped on his band. Take their extracurricular money-spinners. Scoring a TV commercial and covering Donovan's "Season of the Witch" for the film *Shot Andy Warhol* went fine. But they also scored films destined for bargain-bin oblivion: Mr Jealousy, anyone? Thursday? "That was frustrating," Eden snorts, "because we did some good music. I thought Thursday would be cool because it had Mickey Rourke in it. It was terrible!"

Still, they could release "Sweet Child O'Mine," once they get a US label. That sold copies, the first time round. "We would need to hurry," groans Wareham, "because Sheryl Crow is doing it for a movie soundtrack. People would think we copied her."

Somehow, you suspect that the terminally undervalued Luna deserve better than that.

'Days of Our Nights' is out on Beggars Banquet on 4 May; the single 'Superfreaky Memories' is out now

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السؤال الأول

When a poseur gets serious

Ivo Pogorelich is a changed man. His wife's death and the agony of his native Yugoslavia have thrown him into his work with renewed vigour. By Michael Church

The last time I met Ivo Pogorelich, the pianist was sprawled like a pasha in his baronial drawing-room in Surrey. Things were so arranged that I should quiz him from a distance, as though on bended knee. But the figure I ran into at the BBC this week looked more like a night-club bouncer: massively muscular, pony-tailed, in sports gear and, after savaging a hapless *In Tune* presenter live on air, exuding dangerous aggression. Which is the real Pogorelich? What has happened over the past three years? The conventional mad-genius theory – often applied to this passionately Croat virtuoso – doesn't cover the case.

In the Eighties, when he was one of the best-selling classical artists in the world, Pogorelich came on in white silk suits and orange scarves, and eventually disappointed his fans by marrying his (much older) Russian piano teacher. But he loved to shock by where he played (Israel, for example) as well as how, and on the outbreak of war on his home turf he turned political. He became a UNESCO "goodwill ambassador", raising funds for Croatian charities and the restoration of historic Dubrovnik.

At our first meeting he had seemed, in some odd way, to be a spectator at the ringside of his own greatness; as he presented them, all the events in his life had epic significance. Summing up his celebrated elimination from the 1980 Warsaw Chopin competition – sick, guarded by soldiers, and furiously championed by his fellow pianist Martha Argerich – he concluded: "Was I poisoned? I still don't know. But I became a symbol of political things that were to come." Then he gave a curious, disbelieving laugh.

But behind the heroic façade, I sensed a private struggle. He talked

bitterly of his botched pianistic beginning under bad teachers in his native Belgrade, and of his years of corrective slog at the Moscow Conservatoire. But he didn't talk at all about the family he left behind when stardom beckoned in the West. Was his younger brother, also a pianist, any good? His answer was a patronising shrug. He had sacked his family and married his mentor. Was it guilt which made him rally to the cultural defence of his homeland? No comment.

Since then, his wife and mentor Alice Kezeradzic has died. He doesn't talk about her now, but his record of Chopin's Scherzi, which Deutsche

As well as being an artist of genius, this man has a seriously analytical mind

Grammophon has just released, speaks volumes. Not only through the music, which reflects the electric excitement of their last tutor-pupil collaboration, but also through the photograph he's chosen for the liner-note. This shows a couple in the heyday of their love: a powerful woman, and behind her a possessively protecting, slender youth. The real Pogorelich, it seems, is as divided as ever.

And making up for it by furious engagement in public affairs. Last week he was playing in Montreal to raise money for the project he has long championed: a new maternity clinic for Sarajevo, to replace the one shelled to bits by the Serbs. Next week he will be raising more money for that cause in Kuwait. "This will be the first-ever classical piano recital in that country. There were big problems finding an instrument, and finally they have produced one

of a brand I will not name for fear of astonishing you." For some reason this mongrel Joanna must remain a secret. He will give several performances there, including one for students and one for segregated women. "I see this as a pioneering effort," he says.

He won't be drawn on the Kosovo conflict, and stresses his continuing links with Belgrade ("I still have admirers there"). But he's deeply preoccupied with the war – "the images one sees on television throw one out of one's skin" – and with the tradition of Serb violence. "I remember the suppression of Belgrade students in 1969. It happened under our windows, and my parents would not let me watch. That is a memory I have never been free of."

"And I am worried about the Slav race in general." How so? "There is a problem with imagery and mythology with the Slav mentality." The romantically-minded Slav countries are lagging behind in the global digital revolution. "In which classical music is on the losing side."

But is not computer-rich America still producing fabulous pianists? "In 1993, there was held in Pasadena the first Ivo Pogorelich Piano Competition, which had no age limits and therefore allowed a survey of the available pianism in America. And what do you think 90 per cent of the contestants wanted? Not the \$100,000 prize money, but a hundred hours of coaching!" Clinching evidence, he says, that the wired Americans are aware of their cultural impoverishment.

Does he teach? "I don't believe in the multi-capacity of musicians. If you have the qualification to be a motorcyclist, don't drive a bus. To be a tutor takes round-the-clock dedication. Master classes are a waste of time." How well does his younger brother play these days? "I think he performs from time to time."



Pogorelich: 'I don't believe in the multi-capacity of musicians. If you're a motorcyclist, don't drive a bus'

Glynn Griffiths

Pogorelich's next London performance will be on 26 April at the Royal Festival Hall: a Chopin recital to raise cash for the destroyed museum in Vukovar, his latest good cause. The evening will include a raffle for holidays to Zagreb: not a joke, he explains irritably, for it is now one of the safest places on earth. Finally, he talks about Chopin – his experimental daring and the hitherto ignored Spanish influence on his

Mazurkas and Etudes. Then I remember that, as well as being an artist of genius, this provocative poseur has a seriously analytical mind. Will the real Pogorelich ever emerge in unambiguous form? I

doubt it. But while the records remain transcendent, and the good works bear fruit, who cares?

Royal Festival Hall, London SE1 (0171-960 4242)

THE COMPACT COLLECTION

ROB COWAN ON THE WEEK'S NEW CD RELEASES

CLASSICAL MUSIC that enters the popular consciousness is usually overheard rather than listened to. It may harbour a powerful pocket of atmosphere, or serve as a potential soundtrack for the mind's theatre; but the encounter is invariably casual.

When the saxophonist Jan Garbarek first collaborated with the Hilliard Ensemble for ECM's *Officium* in 1994, the haunting combination of early choral music and smooth sax improvisation suggested a lone jazzier loitering against a cathedral wall. It was an in-store favourite, a heady blend of the sacred and the profane; heavens-teasing and provocative on the one hand, soothing and sensuous on the other.

Mnemosyne (Memory) has a tougher edge than *Officium*: its musical material is more varied, ranging in style from a dissonant Delphic psalm, through Hildegard's ecstatic "O Ignis Spiritus" and a Tallis anthem to a Peruvian folk-song and Garbarek's own "Strophe" and "Counter-Strophe". Everything is carefully planned.

Mnemosyne is a sort of collaborative original composition that plays for one-and-three-quarter hours, and ECM's photographic presentation toys with air, earth and spirit much as Garbarek and the Hilliards do in musical terms.

Jazz is probably better listened to than talked about, though if words are to enter into the experience, no one was better qualified to use them than Leonard Bernstein. Hearing Lenny explain the rudiments of jazz is a revelation, and no matter if you already know – or think you know – the basic facts. Rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumental colouring, form – it's all there, effortlessly explained without either jargon or condescension.

Bernstein's music examples are pertinent and often highly amusing (a Bessie Smith blues classic scrubbed up as a squeaky-clean ballad) and there are a couple of additional concert items. WC Handy's St Louis blues *Concerto grosso* has Bernstein conducting and the Louis Armstrong Quintet taking a concertante role, and Howard Brubeck's *Dialogue for Jazz Combo and Orchestra* features brother Dave. But it's Lenny's spoken contribution that makes the CD indispensable.

Switching from Bernstein to the Bard, albeit via Boito's Italian-language re-fashioning, finds us in the company of Verdi's *Otello* and a gripping 1960 recording in which Jon Vickers offers a tortured though vocally distinctive statement of the title role. The conductor is Tullio Serafin, a master of Verdi's idiom who studied alongside both Boito and *Otello*'s first conductor, Serafin doesn't miss a trick: his is a fire tempered not by age, but by discretion, and he always gives his singers room to breathe.

Tito Gobbi portrays a resolute Iago and Leonie Rysanek a noble Desdemona. Sample tracks 17-20 on the first disc, ending with the magnificent "Vengeance" duet. Verdi was rarely closer to Wagner, and these lovers never lose sight of that crucial connection. Toscanini's magnificent mono recording (also on RCA) is not so much displaced as supplemented.

Mnemosyne/Garbarek, Hilliard Ensemble ECM 465 123-2
What is Jazz?/Bernstein Sony Classical SMK 60566
Verdi/Serafin RCA "Living Stereo" 09026 63180 2 (two discs)

FIVE YEARS ago, the then unlikely-sounding partnership of a Norwegian saxophonist and an English vocal quartet gave the premiere performance of the music from their new album, *Officium*, at King's College Chapel. At a time when the classical charts seemed full of monks, angels and nuns, *Officium* created a huge stir, selling 800,000 worldwide. This week it has earned a British gold disc for UK sales of 100,000.

On Wednesday night, Garbarek and the Hilliards returned to King's College for the European concert premiere of *Mnemosyne*. *Officium*'s successor. The new album, which is a double, is both longer and more varied than its predecessor, with a repertoire that spans 2,000 years, three continents and a number of different forms, from fragments of folk songs to a native American dance.

The basic pattern, however, is still the same as before: the Hilliard's sublime, rather ecclesiastical-sounding voices sing, while Garbarek intones odd, oblique shots across their bows with his saxophone.

REVIEW

JAN GARBAREK & THE HILLIARD ENSEMBLE
KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL
CAMBRIDGE

In performance, the combination of the majesty of the venue and the beauty of the music cast a powerful aesthetic spell. The music began with silence, and the Hilliards gathered on stage (well, a makeshift platform in front of the mighty pipe organ) and then commenced to murmur. Slowly, the faint susurrus grew in volume until they began to fill the air.

When the counter-tenor voice of David James – one of the most beautiful sounds in the world – at last came in to join them, you could almost feel the whole audience catch their breath in wonder. Garbarek's first few peeps on the curved soprano sax that he played for almost all of the programme, indicated immediately the new and more sub-



Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble: a powerful aesthetic spell

tle role that he has chosen to play for *Mnemosyne*.

The concert followed the course of the album and it was an often entrancingly beautiful experience, although there has to be a doubt over how much pure beauty one is actually capable of appreciating. After a while, the law of diminishing returns

begins to set in and you cease to be sent into transports of delight by every new song. There's no conflict, little drama, and not much to look at once you've marvelled at the fan vaulting several times, checked out Garbarek's leonine profile and watched the Hilliards go up the nave and down the chancel. About

an hour's length would probably be sufficient, and at 80 minutes the programme was rather too much of a good thing.

The star of the show surely had to be the venue itself and the way the musicians learnt to play it as if it were another instrument, with both Garbarek and the Hilliards engineering some astonishing effects by positioning themselves at different corners of the building. The end, when it came, was a formidable coup de théâtre. As the musicians disappeared down the aisle towards the altar, the sound disappeared with them in a slow fade to pulpit.

The Hilliard Ensemble and Jan Garbarek return to the UK in November for concerts of 'Mnemosyne' in Birmingham (14, Symphony Hall), London (16, Royal Albert Hall), Brighton (18, St Bartholomew's Church) and Durham Cathedral (20)

See the review of 'Mnemosyne' in Compact Collection, left

Beautiful, all too beautiful

ON THE AIR

ANTHONY PAYNE

COMPOSERS HAVE always been capable of responding to a blast from the past. Haydn's vision was newly focused by the overwhelming experience of hearing Handel in Westminster Abbey from a choir of totally unauthentic size; Bach's counterpoint immeasurably enriched the work of Mozart's late years; Beethoven responded as powerfully as did Haydn to the music of Handel, who was by then even more distant in historical perspective. The list is endless, and includes most creators of genius. Indeed, the ability to respond in this way without being overwhelmed is perhaps one of the characteristics of creative vigour.

In the present century, the opportunities for such influential experience have increased a

hundredfold. Haydn would not have had to wait until his old age before hearing Handel – a radio or CD player would have served his needs decades earlier – although that is not to say that his hearing Handel did not occur at just the right time in his creative development. But that is another story. The point is that the incredible amount of music, going back to the dawn of cultural time, which is now available at the turning of a knob or insertion of a disc poses a crucial problem: and composers from Stravinsky onwards have had to go through tortuous stylistic hoops in order to preserve their creative integrity in the face of an increasingly available past, whether embodied in a Beethoven symphony, a Bach Passion or a

Machaut Mass. We live in an era that is obsessed with the past, a fact not unconnected with that past's well-nigh exhaustive documentation on disc. Post-Stravinskian composers are becoming increasingly aware of a greatly extended cultural heritage that somehow has to be dealt with.

It has led to a number of them writing music about other music, rather than dealing with primary thought and emotion at first hand. The resulting vision is most sophisticatedly layered, as in the *Scenes from Schumann* by Robin Holloway, broadcast live from Belfast last week as part of BBC Radio 3's *Sounding the Century*, but there exists the ever-present danger of becoming psychologically crippled by emotional dependence.

There are many different ways of falling into this trap, and often fascinating music results, as in the case of Berio's *Sinfonia*, but danger still lurks. In Holloway's case there is abundant invention and brilliant compositional virtuosity, as he shifts, reflects upon, refracts, distorts and reworks ideas from Schumann's songs. There is, indeed, an exhilarating reclamation here of Romantic expression after his Constructivist earlier pieces, but allusions to a previous zeitgeist, rather than recognisable quotations, might well have been a healthier response to his needs.

Jonathan Harvey, whose deeply stirring *Passion and Resurrection* was broadcast half-an-hour later on Radio 3's *Hear and Now*, showed

equally sophisticated links with a grand tradition stretching back through the centuries. The austerity and concentration of Heinrich Schütz's Passion music had been a nourishing presence during the work's conception, not to speak of the high drama and spiritual intensity of Bach's Passions.

However, Harvey's processes may have been pressed into service – those halos in harmonics that crown Christ's sayings, for instance – quotation is not part of Harvey's compositional armoury. This superbly sustained church opera, directed with wholly committed concentration by Martin Neary, maintains a respectful distance from its models, allowing self-reliant creativity its head.

THE FRIDAY REVIEW
THE INDEPENDENT
NEW
GENERAL
HISTORY X
THE ROAD
JOHN TALE
THE HALLWAYS
THE PAST
THE STATION
THE REACTION
THE MONSTERS
THE BEAUTIFUL
THE JOE



THE INFORMATION DAILY

CINEMA · THEATRE · EXHIBITIONS · MUSIC · DANCE · LITERATURE · COMEDY · EVENTS · TV & RADIO

NEW FILMS

ACTRESSES (15, 88 mins)
Director: Ventura Pons
Starring: Rosa María Sardá, Nina Eserpi
Cult Spanish director Pons rustles up a goopy-eyed bit of cinematic navel-gazing in this ode to the acting lark. Shot back in 1997 (before last year's art-house hit, *Carrales*), *Actresses* details the earliest research of Merce Pons's aspiring thespian - interviewing three diverse old hands (Rosa María Sardá, Nina Eserpi, Anna Lizaran) about their life and times in the greasepaint trade. Part acting masterclass, part loquacious reminiscence, *Actresses* slowly stews in an ambience of oppressive theatricality. Its performers talk as if they're being paid by the word.
Repertory: ICA Cinema

HAPPINESS (18, 134 mins)
Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Dylan Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, Screen on the Hill, Virgin Haymarket

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG, 100 mins)
Director: Oliver Parker
Starring: Cate Blanchett, Minnie Driver
Stuffed-shirt politician Sir Robert Chiltern (Jeremy Northam) is being held to ransom by Julianne Moore's brittle blackmail. Wife Cate Blanchett looks on in horror, while louché Rupert Everett and effervescent Minnie Driver provide the comic relief. And so it goes. Oliver Parker's film is a proficient but oddly mechanical overhaul of Oscar Wilde's still-pertinent satire of middle-class hypocrisies - the friction between the public and private sphere. The sharp dialogue is rather blurred by the snappy editing and sumptuous design, but bright playing from a starry cast helps to paper over the cracks.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Clapham

AMERICAN HISTORY X (18, 117 mins)
Director: Edward Zwick
Starring: Edward Norton, Ice Cube
American History X is a liberal essay on right-wing fanaticism, which nonetheless indulges in some vicious Nazi chic.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

ARLINGTON ROAD (15, 117 mins)
Director: Mark Pellington
Starring: Jeff Bridges, Tim Robbins
Mark Pellington's intriguingly staged paranoia thriller stars Jeff Bridges and Tim Robbins. West End: Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

AN AUTUMN TALE (U, 111 mins)
Director: Eric Rohmer
Starring: Jeanne Balibar, Jean-Pierre L  aud
The final part of Eric Rohmer's *Tales of the Four Seasons* is a lovely elegiac and as warm as sunshine. West End: Curzon Minerva, Renoir

BEDROOMS AND HALLWAYS (15, 96 mins)
Director: Kevin McKidd
Starring: Kevin McKidd, Gillian Anderson
The latest offering from *This Life* school of British film-making sees Kevin McKidd's giddy Londoner being put through all manner of romantic hoops in the run-up to his 30th birthday. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Fulham Rd. Repertory: The Pullman Everyman

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12, 111mins)
Director: Hugh Wilson
Starring: Brendan Fraser
Hugh Wilson's workmanlike Cold War satire starring Brendan Fraser. West End: Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

CENTRAL STATION (15, 110 mins)
Director: Fernando Montenegro
Starring: Fernanda Montenegro
Central Station trails Fernanda Montenegro's retired schoolteacher and her abandoned nine-year-old charge on a hunt through the badlands of Sert  o for the boy's missing father. West End: Curzon Mayfair, Ritzy Cinema

A CIVIL ACTION (15, 115 mins)
Director: John Travolta
Starring: John Travolta, Annette Bening
John Travolta's ambulance-chasing lawyer takes a shot at redemption in this complex and frequently absorbing courtroom saga. West End: Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas

THE FACILITY (15, 104 mins)
Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Dylan Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

GODS AND MONSTERS (15, 105 mins)
Director: Peter Jackson
Starring: Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Curzon Soho, Metro, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema, Watermans Arts Centre

HIGH ART (18, 102 mins)
Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Dylan Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (PG, 114 mins)
Director: Roberto Benigni
Starring: Roberto Benigni, Nicoletta Braschi
Roberto Benigni's Oscar-winning comedy about fascist Italy and the death-camps. West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas

MIGHTY JOE (PG, 114 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: Kevin Costner, Michael Biehn
This children's comedy is disposable Disney fluff, yet it boasts a ready charm that's hard to dislike. West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

PICTURE HOUSE, ODEON KENSINGTON, ODEON MARBLE ARCH, ODEON SWISS COTTAGE, ODEON WEST END, RITZY CINEMA, SCREEN ON BAKER STREET, THE TRICYLE CINEMA, UCI WHITELEYS, VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD AND LOCAL CINEMAS

PROMETHEUS (15, 130 mins)
Director: Tony Harrison
Starring: Michael Feast, Walter Sparrow
Tony Harrison's dense and literate film-poem kicks off with a visit from Hermes (Michael Feast) to a depressed mining town in Yorkshire, before moseying off through the smogstacked landscapes of polluted Eastern Europe. Harrison's rigorous, locomotive verse stokes an awkward and overwrought narrative (updating Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*) into life, but it's still too long, too ill-paced, too heavy handed in its eco-conscious message. Two hours in, and those rhyming couplets start to grate a bit.
West End: Notting Hill Coronet

RETURN TO PARADISE (15, 109 mins)
Director: Joseph Ruben
Starring: Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Joaquin Phoenix, David Conrad
Eden takes on a definite whiff of sulphur in the course of Joseph Ruben's fact-based saga, as two strutting graduate travellers (Vince Vaughn and David Conrad) are impelled to return to the scene of their former crimes when an erstwhile buddy (Joaquin Phoenix) is busted for drugs possession in Malaysia. A classic morality play in the "what would you do if?" mould, *Return to Paradise* still conspires to bungle its ready-made drama. Opening out as a taut marriage of *Midnight Express* and *The Beach*, its inherent tension seeps away throughout a pedestrian second half. A love angle between Vaughn and Anne Heche's earnest defence lawyer looks tacked on as an afterthought.
West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

N   (15, 85 mins)
Director: Robert Lepage
Starring: Robert Lepage
Robert Lepage's third feature obliquely spotlights Quebec's push for independence in 1970 with an absurdist parallel that crosscuts between the trials of a troubled actress and her activist boyfriend. But its fascinating elements fail to gel; its scenes unravel; its reach exceeds its grasp.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre

PAYBACK (18, 110 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: Kevin Costner, Jason Patric
Based on the source novel that inspired John Boorman's *Point Blank*, this rumbling revenge thriller sends its double-crossed-and-left-for-dead anti-hero (Mel Gibson) on a mission to get even. West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

PLUNKETT AND MACLEANE (15, 100 mins)
Director: Robert Carlyle
Starring: Robert Carlyle, John Lee Miller
Plunkett and Macleane (Robert Carlyle and John Lee Miller) are rakish Dick Turpin cuttings a dash through 18th-century society. Instead of a decent plot, director Jake Scott offers noise, colour and virtuosic pop-promo visuals. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

THE RED VIOLIN (15, 132 mins)
Director: Francois Girard
Starring: Fanny Ardant, Jean-Pierre L  aud
Fran  ois Girard's daisy chain of historical vignettes follows the course of a cursed violin down the centuries. Unfortunately, a thrift-shop budget leaves many of the period backdrops looking like cast-offs from a BBC schools programme. More crucially, Girard's bitty narrative leaves the film labouring in third gear throughout. West End: Barbican Screen, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Swiss Cottage. And local cinemas

THE RUGRATS MOVIE (U, 80 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: John Dahl
Kids, no doubt, will eat this feature-length cartoon up. Adults should simply grin and bear it. West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15, 123 mins)
Director: John MacLean
Starring: Gwyneth Paltrow, Joseph Fiennes
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

SLAM (15, 99 mins)
Director: Mark Pellington
Starring: Mark Pellington
Even if slam-poetry's clanking rhymes make you want to "slam" the perpetrator's head in a car door, Marc Levin's drama still carries an emotional force. West End: Metro, Ritzy Cinema. And local cinemas

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG, 117 mins)
Director: Franco Zeffirelli
Starring: Franco Zeffirelli, Jean-Pierre L  aud
Franco Zeffirelli's *Tea with Mussolini* is a typically loquacious tale of three dotty Brits (Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright) adrift in Mussolini-era Tuscany. West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys. And local cinemas

THE THIN RED LINE (15, 170 mins)
Director: Terrence Malick
Starring: Terrence Malick
Terrence Malick's long-awaited return to the director's chair is a fabulous, fever-struck war film. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero

WAKING NED (PG, 91 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: Kevin Costner, Michael Biehn
This children's comedy is disposable Disney fluff, yet it boasts a ready charm that's hard to dislike. West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon West End, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Gods and Monsters (15)
A droll speculation on the last days of 1930s horror auteur Charles Whale (Ian McKellen), who is hypnotised by the alluring form of his Beverly Hills gardener (Brendan Fraser). Director Bill Condon won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay.

Happiness (18)
Set in New Jersey, Todd Solondz's second film is a comedy of loneliness and sexual deviancy that reaffirms this young writer-director's talent.

High Art (18)
A portrait of the artist as lesbian screw-up, Lisa Cholodenko's bitterly witty take on New York living (and dying) boasts one of the performances of the year from Ally Sheedy.

The Faculty (15)
Kevin Williamson does it again with this sci-fi tale of alien invaders (right). Beautiful people, a sharp script, subversive morals. Piper Laurie... Why can't all teen films be like this?

Shakespeare in Love (15)
This enjoyable, Oscar-laden historical romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow (Best Actress) head an impressive cast.

ANTHONY QUINN AND CHARLOTTE O'SULLIVAN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Good (Donmar Warehouse, London)
Starring Charles Dance, CP Taylor's play about accommodations with conscience is revived in a sensitive production by Michael Grandage. To 22 May

Gross Indecency (Gielgud Theatre, London)
The artfully fractured form of Mervyn Kaufman's compelling play about Oscar Wilde manages to present the writer in all his complex contradictoriness. Booking to 5 Jun

Forbidden Broadway (Jermyn Street Theatre, London)
Deliciously spiteful and tremendously funny selection of musical theatre spoofs from Sondheim to *The Lion King* via Elaine Paige. To 10 May

Volpone (Swan Theatre, Stratford)
Comedies don't come any funnier or more astirring than Ben Jonson's brilliant dissection of avaricious, over-reaching egotism (right). To 9 Oct

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford)
In Michael Boyd's beguiling staging, Josette Simon's Amazonian Titania is sex-on-very-long-legs and could devour Tina Turner for breakfast. To 9 Oct

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Jackson Pollock (Tate Gallery)
Big, revelatory retrospective for the wild hero of Abstract Expressionism (going on Old Master), legendary for his great drip paintings, but virtually unknown here for 40 years. To 6 Jun

Portraits by Ingres (National Gallery)
Some of the smartest, most intense portraiture ever (right). Men as icons of power; women as exquisite melanges of flesh and fabric. To 25 Apr

Thinking Aloud (Camden Arts Centre)
Sculptor Richard Wentworth curates this curious and cheering exploration of creativity in art, design and life: an assortment of rough drafts, doodles, try-outs and models. To 30 May

Andreas Gursky (Dean Gallery, Edinburgh)
Photographs 1994-98: huge, panoramic, high-finish, micro-detailed, digitally manipulated images of our world - stock-exchange floor, cityscape, hotel foyer. Vistas of more than the eye can see. To 10 May

Antony Gormley's 'Field' (firstsite at Roman House, Colchester)
One of the great hits of the decade: a sea of 40,000 pint-sized clay men - obedient, expectant, menacing, and stopping dead in a line at your feet. To 23 May

TOM LUBBOCK

CINEMA WEST END

ABC PANTON STREET
(0870-000077) @ Piccadilly Circus
Elizabeth 2.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm
Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
Milly and Jackie 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm
The Opposite of Sex 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC PICCADILLY
(0870-000077) @ Piccadilly Circus
Elizabeth 2.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm
Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
Milly and Jackie 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm
The Opposite of Sex 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVE
(0870-000077) @ Leicester Square
Elizabeth 2.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm
Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
Milly and Jackie 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm
The Opposite of Sex 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC SWISS COTTAGE
(0870-000077) @ Swiss Cottage
Elizabeth 2.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm
Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
Milly and Jackie 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm
The Opposite of Sex 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM CRT RD
(0870-000077) @ Tottenham Court Road
Elizabeth 2.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm
Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
Milly and Jackie 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm
The Opposite of Sex 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

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ABC TOTTENHAM CRT RD
(0870-000077) @ Tottenham Court Road
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Festen 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.0pm, 8.20pm
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STRATFORD
NEW PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3388)
BR/4 Stratford Blast from the Past
12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
10.45pm, 12.45pm, 2.45pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm, 12.45pm
1.45pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm, 9.45pm, 11.45pm
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STREATHAM
ABC (0207-902 0415) BR: Streatham Hill
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ODEON (0207-550007) BR: Streatham Hill
A Bug's Life 12.40pm, 2.40pm, 4.40pm, 6.40pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm
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SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0207-888888) BR: Surrey Quays
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SWISS COTTAGE
WARRIOR VILLAGE (0171-604 3110)
A Civil Action 2.25pm, 4.25pm, 6.25pm, 8.25pm
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CARDIFF
WARRIOR VILLAGE (01222-804441) Pay-Per-View
A Civil Action 2.25pm, 4.25pm, 6.25pm, 8.25pm
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WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0207-902 0424) BR: Walthamstow
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WILLOW
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THEATRE
WEST END

AMADEUS (0171-307 1234) David Thewlis stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama. The story of the rivalry between Salieri and Mozart. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE Richard Dreyfuss and Martin Mull star in Neil Simon's mid-life crisis comedy. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

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THE INFORMATION ON
Kandinsky at the Royal Academy

What is it? First British retrospective for Wassily Kandinsky (*below*), widely acknowledged as the founder of abstract art, comprising 139 works by the Moscow-born artist, who died aged 78 in 1944. There's little doubt as to Kandinsky's influence on modern art, but the exhibition has prompted some critics to highlight his limitations.

Who Was He? Born in Russia in 1866, Kandinsky abandoned a law career to go to art school in Munich. Initially, his work was typified by fantasy images, before he became a key figure in the German avant-garde movement, and then

turned towards abstraction. The First World War brought his progressive period to an end for the most part, and he retreated to Russia.

What They Say About Him "I think you have to admit that the pictures are not much good... he simply can't do energy and he can't do tension," Tom Lubbock, *The Independent*. "Around 1912, Kandinsky embarked on a voyage into an abstract universe... He was a liberator, and the finest exhibits from that period change his Royal Academy exhibition of works on paper with an impassioned, surging energy," Richard Cork, *The Times*.

Where You Can See It Kandinsky: Watercolours and Other Works on Paper at the Royal Academy, W1 (0171-300 8000/5760) to 4 Jul

EXHIBITIONS
BATH THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY For Most of a Century the Bath Photographic Society has been producing a series of exhibitions of local and national interest. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

BRECON THEATRE BY THE RIVER The Brecon Theatre is a small, intimate venue with a fine view of the Brecon Waterfall. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

BRISTOL WATERSHED BAND Fiddle, Irish, and Celtic music. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

BRISTOL WATERSHED BAND Fiddle, Irish, and Celtic music. 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

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FRIDAY TELEVISION

THE FRIDAY REVIEW
The Independent 16 April 1999

ROBERT HANKS TELEVISION REVIEW



WITH THE new millennium just around the corner, I suppose it was only a matter of time before television started sprouting end-of-the-world sagas. The last Train (TV) began last week with passengers aboard the original, I particularly liked getting stuck in a tunnel owing to the wrong kind of asteroid on the tracks. Frozen in suspended animation through mechanisms too silly to hear repeating, they emerged 34 years later to find that a drunk of said asteroid having landed in Zambia, knocking up millions of tons of dust and blocking the sunlight, most of the world's population had died of cold and starvation. Sheltered had been transformed into a post-industrial urban wasteland - at times you could suspect satire - blighted by acid rain, petrified by packs of wild dogs and dotted with tropical vegetation. The impact having dispersed seeds and spores, there is a recollection of Terry Nation's 1960s apocalyptic drama, *Serretors*, in which a similarly ill-assorted group was left to struggle after mankind had been all but wiped out by a laboratory-produced virus; that turned into a peculiar pre-emptive strike against the system was seen as the key to re-establishing civilisation.

This issue of reference may just be my over-active imagination, though last week's explicit quotation from *Fringers* White suggests otherwise. It doesn't alter the fact that *The Last Train* is a classically made holocaust, if nothing else, it makes the prospect of a world without television seem a tiny bit closer and a tiny bit more desirable.

BBC1

BBC2

ITV Carlton

Channel 4

Channel 5

- 6.00 Business Breakfast** (2720) 7.00 News (1) (6579).
- 6.00 Kinky** (5) (1) (658363) 7.45 *Cartoon Cow* (1) (658363) 8.00 *The New Weather* (1) (658363) 8.15 *News* (1) (658363) 8.30 *Regional News* (1) (658363) 8.45 *News* (1) (658363) 8.55 *News* (1) (658363) 9.00 *News* (1) (658363) 9.15 *News* (1) (658363) 9.30 *News* (1) (658363) 9.45 *News* (1) (658363) 9.55 *News* (1) (658363) 10.00 *News* (1) (658363) 10.15 *News* (1) (658363) 10.30 *News* (1) (658363) 10.45 *News* (1) (658363) 10.55 *News* (1) (658363) 11.00 *News* (1) (658363) 11.15 *News* (1) (658363) 11.30 *News* (1) (658363) 11.45 *News* (1) (658363) 11.55 *News* (1) (658363) 12.00 *News* (1) (658363) 12.15 *News* (1) (658363) 12.30 *News* (1) (658363) 12.45 *News* (1) (658363) 12.55 *News* (1) (658363) 1.00 *News* (1) (658363) 1.15 *News* (1) (658363) 1.30 *News* (1) (658363) 1.45 *News* (1) (658363) 1.55 *News* (1) (658363) 2.00 *News* (1) (658363) 2.15 *News* (1) (658363) 2.30 *News* (1) (658363) 2.45 *News* (1) (658363) 2.55 *News* (1) (658363) 3.00 *News* (1) (658363) 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